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"The Annual Income is now £111,113 14s. 0d.

"The Claims paid on account of Deaths during the year, amount to £18,914 18s. 0d., and the sum of £3,493 15s. 8d. is due under this head, not yet claimed."

"The extent of the increase, however, will be better shown by the following statement of the progress of the Institution from its commencement, twelve years ago, appended to the report:

Years ending.	No. of Policies issued.	Annual Income.	Amount of Capital.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
20 Nov. 1836	616	8,021 12 2	10,736 3 0
" " 1837	435	14,600 0 0	31,592 10 5
" " 1838	450	19,934 19 4	46,855 0 10
" " 1839	490	25,497 4 2	64,959 10 10
" " 1840	494	31,051 16 10	99,545 13 9
" " 1841	357	36,357 1 4	114,993 2 4
" " 1842	364	39,360 9 7	139,806 1 7
" " 1843	703	44,219 17 0	167,079 11 2
" " 1844	722	55,037 9 2	202,162 1 9
" " 1845	911	70,819 14 5	241,460 13 3
" " 1846	1005	88,940 8 2	299,675 12 4
" " 1847	1234	111,113 13 0	367,172 16 0
Total number	7799		

"So large a number of Policies as 1,234 issued in a single year by one Office is without precedent; and it is to be observed that this has taken place in a year of great pecuniary pressure, and in the face of the great endeavours made by Offices started within the last three or four years, and the corresponding exertions of old Offices to maintain their relative superiority. It is to be observed, too, that the sums insured exceed the usual average—as the premium on each, dividing the total amount by the number of Policies, is nearly £18; showing that the average sum insured in each case, regard being had to the probable ages of the assured, must be about £750. Thus the Office has issued at the rate of six such Policies daily, throughout the entire year—a powerful indication of the increasing knowledge which the public are gaining of the benefits of Life Assurance. The National Provident is a Mutual Office, the surplus profits of which are apportioned every five years. The year just closed rounds up one of these cycles; and Mr. Ansell, the Actuary, is about making the requisite calculations for the apportionment."—*The Post Magazine*.



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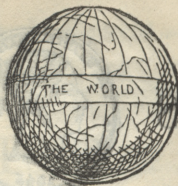
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
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Prepared only by **BENJAMIN MOXON and Sons**, Chemists, Hull, and sold by all Medicine Vendors in town & country, in bottles at 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d., and 11s.

(N.B.—"Moxon & Smith, Chemists, Hull," is engraved on the Government Stamp.)

Of whom may be had the

## CONCENTRATED COMPOUND DECOCTION OF SARSAPARILLA,

Prepared by Benjamin Moxon and Sons, in strict accordance with the London Pharmacopœia, and sold in bottles at 4s. 6d., 12s., and 22s., equal respectively to 6, 16, and 30 pints of the decoction prepared in the usual way.

**SARSAPARILLA**, in the form of the Compound Decoction, is the best remedy for Scurvy, Scrofula, Eruptions of the Skin, Chronic Rheumatism, effects of Mercury and Lues, and all other cases where an alterative is necessary.



# SOVEREIGN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY,

No. 5, ST. JAMES'S STREET, LONDON.

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Perfect security in a subscribed Capital, which guarantees the prompt settlement of every claim, with participating and non-participating rates on the lowest scale, especially for terms of years.

The Assured can anticipate or obtain the advance of the full amount of the Policy, on giving approved available security for a certain number of annual payments, as explained by the Prospectus.

Every facility afforded to persons assuring the lives of others, so as to render such Policies effectual securities.

A new plan of gradual or accumulative Assurance, particularly adapted for young lives, and for such as cannot, without inconvenience, undertake the payment of a fixed premium, securing at once provision in case of premature death, and an accumulating fund, available during life, should occasion require.

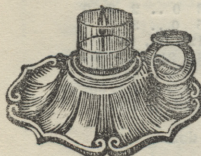
ANNUITIES, ENDOWMENTS, ADVANCES, and LOANS, on liberal terms.

Detailed Prospectuses, forms of Proposal, and every information, may be had on application, either personally or by letter, at the Company's Offices.

The usual commission to Solicitors and Agents.

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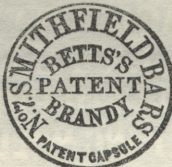


THE breakage and uncertain burning of rushlights render them useless. The dirt, smoke, and smell from oil is very disagreeable. The inconvenience in not being able to move the common Mortars after being lighted, and the liability of the paper taking fire, make them extremely dangerous articles, and should not be used. All these defects are remedied in CLARKE'S PATENT MORTAR LAMPS and LAMP MORTARS, which are clean, elegant, economical, and safe, give three times the light of all Mortars with paper round them, can be carried without extinguishing the light, and have neither smell nor smoke. Persons burning night-lights should not use any other. The Lamps are made in japanned, gilt and bronze metal, plain, coloured, and beautifully painted glass, and in papier maché, from 6d. each.

Mortars, 6d. per box. May be obtained, wholesale and retail, at the Patentee's Lamp Manufactory, 55, Albany Street, Regent's Park.



Brown, 4s. 6d. per bottle.  
Pale, 5s. ditto.



3s. per bottle.



10s. per doz. large bottles.  
7s. per doz. small ditto.  
exclusive of carriage from London.

## "THE STANDARD OF COGNAC,"

WHICH IS THE BEST FOREIGN BRANDY,

THE PATENT BRANDY, AND THE GENUINE SELTERS WATER, protected by the Patent Metallic Capsule, the only sure and self-evident safeguard against adulteration, can be obtained throughout the Kingdom at the respective prices above mentioned, or at

7. SMITHFIELD BARS, AND 96. ST. JOHN'S STREET, LONDON.

SEND EIGHT POSTAGE STAMPS,

And by return, and Post Free, you will receive a handsome Tea-spoon of

## WATSONS' SOLID ALBATA PLATE,

which is rapidly superseding Silver for all domestic uses. This is the only SOLID substitute now sold. Unlike plated goods of any kind, there is nothing to wear off, so that the more you rub and clean it, the better it will continue to look, though it should be in daily use for FIFTY YEARS. Do not be afraid to put it to any test, and then send your order. A full Catalogue of Prices, with patterns of every other article which is manufactured from this beautiful metal, for the table or the sideboard, will be enclosed with the Sample Spoon. This Metal may be engraved as silver, with crests, arms, &c.—N.B. In CANDLESTICKS it is extremely beautiful.

Address, WATSONS', 41 and 42, Barbican, (corner of Princes Street), and 16, Norton Folgate, London.





EXTRACT FROM "THE PATENT JOURNAL" OF THE 11<sup>TH</sup>  
OF DECEMBER, 1847.

"PATENTS RECENTLY GRANTED.—To WILLIAM DAKIN, of NUMBER  
"ONE, SAINT PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, 'for Improvements in  
"Cleaning and Roasting Coffee, in the Apparatus and Machinery to be  
"used therein; and also in the Apparatus for making Infusions and  
"Decoctions of Coffee."

**PRELIMINARY ANNOUNCEMENT.**

HER MAJESTY having been graciously pleased to grant her Royal  
Letters Patent to

**WILLIAM DAKIN,**

**OF NUMBER ONE, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON,**

Under the above title, and for the purposes declared, DAKIN and  
COMPY. take this early opportunity of informing the Public that the  
extensive Engines and Machinery for carrying out the Patent are being  
got ready with every possible despatch; and that on their completion, the  
Firm will be in a position to bring this extraordinary and highly-important  
invention prominently before the Public—an invention which by the adop-  
tion of a simple scientific principle, altogether supersedes every other plan  
introduced, developing in coffee a *richness, purity, and delicacy* of flavour,  
not hitherto considered as belonging to this berry.



## DEFORMITIES OF THE CHEST AND SPINE.



EAGLAND's newly-invented INVISIBLE SPINE SUPPORTERS will be found well deserving the attention of the medical profession, and of persons suffering under Spinal deformity and its consequences. As any attempt at a description must needs fall short of giving a correct idea of the plan itself, Mr. EAGLAND solicits an inspection. They are beautifully simple and eminently successful, quite imperceptible, and conceal the deformity from the keenest observer. Mr. E. has the pleasure to add, that he is empowered to refer to ladies of the highest respectability as to the remedial effects produced by their use.

21, COVENTRY STREET, HAYMARKET, LONDON.

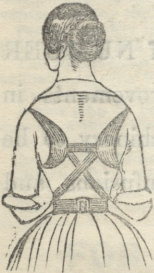
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## BINYON'S ELASTIC CHEST EXPANDER.

### STOOPING of the SHOULDERS and CON-

TRACTION of the CHEST are entirely prevented, and gently and effectually removed in Youth, and Ladies and Gentlemen, by the occasional use of the IMPROVED ELASTIC CHEST EXPANDER, which is light, simple, easily applied, either above or beneath the dress, and worn without any uncomfortable constraint or impediment to exercise. To young persons especially it is highly beneficial, immediately producing an evident IMPROVEMENT in the FIGURE, and tending greatly to prevent the incursion of PULMONARY DISEASES; whilst to the Invalid, and those much engaged in sedentary pursuits, such as Reading or Studying, Working, Drawing, or Music, it is found to be invaluable, as it expands the Chest and affords a great support to the back. It is made in Silk; and can be forwarded, per post, by Mr. ALFRED BINYON, Sole Manufacturer and Proprietor, No. 40, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, London; or full particulars, on receipt of a Postage Stamp.



## CHILDREN'S FROCKS, COATS, AND PELISSES.

CHILDREN'S FROCKS, COATS, and PELISSES in all the most appropriate materials and prevailing styles, a large portion of which are expressly adapted for SCHOOL WEAR, at

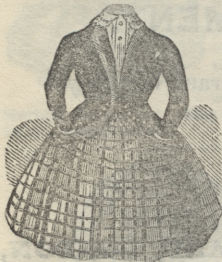
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SEVERAL HUNDRED constantly on view, from the useful In-door at 1s. 11d.; Medium, 5s. 6d., 7s. 6d., 11s. 6d.; Handsome, 15s. 6d., 18s. 6d., 21s.,—up to the richest goods made in Silk Velvets (black, and all colours), three, four, and five guineas.

UNDRESS HOLLAND FROCKS, 1s. 9d., 1s. 11d.; Pinafores, 1s., 1s. 2d.; Blouses, 3s. 6d., 4s. 6d., 5s. 6d.

INFANTS' CLOAKS, HOODS, HATS, BONNETS, Long and Short ROBES, French Cambric Caps, Day

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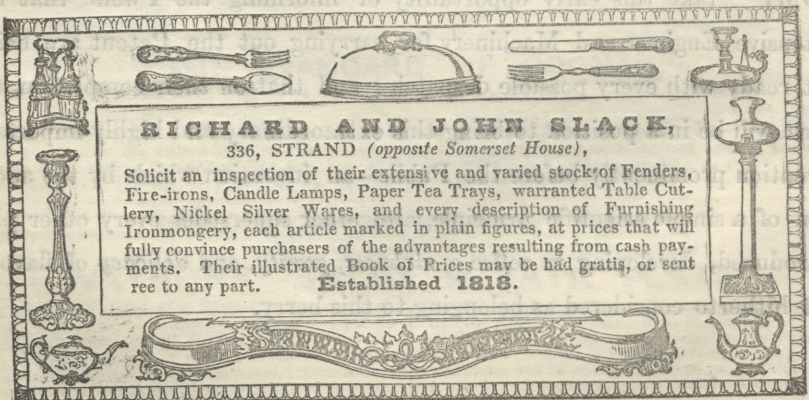


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Solicit an inspection of their extensive and varied stock of Fenders, Fire-irons, Candle Lamps, Paper Tea Trays, warranted Table Cutlery, Nickel Silver Wares, and every description of Furnishing Ironmongery, each article marked in plain figures, at prices that will fully convince purchasers of the advantages resulting from cash payments. Their illustrated Book of Prices may be had gratis, or sent free to any part.

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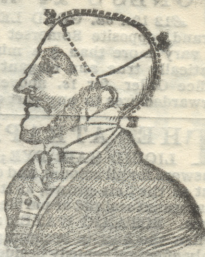


## THE GENTLEMAN'S REAL HEAD OF HAIR or INVISIBLE PERUKE.

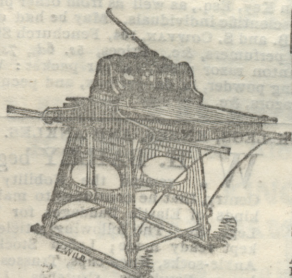
The principle upon which this Peruke is made is so superior to everything yet produced, that the Manufacturer invites the honour of a visit from the Sceptic and the Connoisseur, that one may be convinced and the other gratified, by inspecting this and other novel and beautiful specimens of the Perruqueian Art, at the establishment of the Sole Inventor, F. BROWNE, 47, FENCHURCH-ST.

### F. BROWNE'S INFALLIBLE MODE OF MEASURING THE HEAD.

Round the Head in manner of a fillet, leaving the Ears loose .....	As dotted 1 to 1.	Inches.	Eighths
From the Forehead over to the poll, as deep each way as required .....	As dotted 2 to 2.		
From one Temple to the other, across the rise or Crown of the head to where the Hair grows .....	As marked 3 to 3.		



THE CHARGE FOR THIS UNIQUE HEAD OF HAIR ONLY £1 10s.



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For the execution, either on ZINC or STONE, of every Description of LANDSCAPES, PORTRAITS, BOTANICAL, MECHANICAL, ANATOMICAL, AND OTHER DRAWINGS, MAPS AND PLANS OF ESTATES, ELEVATIONS, FAC SIMILIES, WRITINGS, CIRCULAR LETTERS, ETC., ETC., With the utmost Dispatch, and on the most moderate Terms.

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Adapted to Chemists, Confectioners, Booksellers, Stationers, or any light business, may be obtained for the sale of the celebrated Teas and Coffees imported by the CHINA TEA COMPANY, in any Town in which a vacancy has occurred.

Eleven years of increasing public patronage has stamped these articles with a reputation, which the ephemeral establishments of the day may well envy. The Proprietors now filling up such vacancies as have occurred from deaths, removals, &c., cannot impress too forcibly the expediency of an early application to prevent disappointments—as it is a fixed regulation to appoint only ONE AGENT in each town. The Teas and Coffees are packed in lead and sealed, in packages containing from one pound to two ounces. The employment is not only to be esteemed on account of the direct profits, which, on articles of hourly and universal consumption cannot fail to be considerable; but for the additional advantage it confers by bringing the Agent into contact with a numerous class of customers, who may thus become purchasers of other merchandise. The fullest particulars will be forwarded, free, on application, post-paid, to the China Tea Company, 106, Newgate Street, London.

## COUGHS AND INFLUENZA.

### KEATING'S COUGH LOZENGES,

STRONGLY recommended by the Faculty for giving relief in that distressing Cough which invariably follows an attack of Influenza.

Prepared and sold in boxes, 1s. 1½d., and tins, 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d. and 10s. 6d. each, by THOMAS KEATING, Chymist, &c., 79, St. Paul's Churchyard, London; and retail, by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Vendors.

### IMPORTANT TESTIMONIALS.

(SELECTED FROM SOME HUNDREDS.)

#### CURE OF COUGH AFTER ATTACK OF INFLUENZA.

Dover, 24th February, 1848.

SIR,—Please to send to Messrs. Barclay and Sons for enclosure, another dozen of your excellent Cough Lozenges. Having lately had a severe attack of Influenza attended with violent Cough for five days, preventing my lying down in bed I made trial of your Lozenges, and am happy to say, with the blessing of God they proved of the greatest service, and their use produced almost instantaneous relief. I give you this intelligence from a desire that others might also be led to make the trial. I hope they will experience the same result.

I remain, your's truly,

O. HAMBROOK.

#### ANOTHER INSTANCE OF THE GOOD EFFECTS OF KEATING'S COUGH LOZENGES, UPWARDS OF TWENTY-ONE YEARS' STANDING.

Liverpool, 6, Bolt Place, Jan. 26, 1848.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have great pleasure in informing you that my wife has received great benefit from the use of Keating's Cough Lozenges, you recommended her a short time since. Previous to this she had been troubled with a severe cough, and was under some of our first medical men here without experiencing any relief; however, Keating's Lozenges have done wonders.—With respects, believe me, your's faithfully,

To Mr. GEORGE H. HOWELL, Chemist, 72, Dale-street.

THOS. MAYOR.



**JONES'S £4 4s. 0d. Silver, and £12 12s. 0d. GOLD LEVER WATCHES** at 338, Strand, opposite Somerset House. Warranted not to vary more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  a minute per week. Mathematically true and elegant. On receipt of a Post Office Order for 1s. above the Price, one will be forwarded free to any part of the Kingdom.

**THE ATRAPILATORY, or LIQUID HAIR DYE;** the only dye that really answers for all colours, and does not require re-doing but as the hair grows, as it never fades or acquires that unnatural red or purple tint common to all other dyes. **BOTANIC WATER** and **BEAR'S GREASE.** When the hair is becoming thin and falling off, the only effectual remedy besides shaving the head is the use of the two above-named articles, applied alternately—the botanic water to cleanse the roots from scurf, and as a stimulant, and the bear's grease as a nourisher. **THE NEW TOOTH-PICK BRUSH,** thoroughly cleansing between the teeth, when used up and down, and polishing the surface when used cross-ways. The hair warranted never to come out. **THE UNION and TRIPLE HAIR BRUSHES.** **THE DOUBLE ANTIPRESSURE NAIL BRUSH.** **THE MEDIUM SHAVING BRUSH.** **THE RAILWAY STROP** and **POWDER.**

The above new and elegant articles, in addition to a very extensive assortment of beautiful **PERFUMES**, are the sole **MANUFACTURES and INVENTIONS** of **MESSRS. ROSS AND SONS**, 119 and 120, Bishops-gate-street, London.

**BALSAM COPAIBA**, and all Medicines of a nauseous character, may now be taken without inconvenience, by means of the

**PATENT ORGANIC CAPSULES.**

These Capsules will be found superior to those made with Gelatine. They remain entire until they have passed through the stomach into the intestines; and the medicine being efficiently brought in contact with the organs it is intended to affect, the usual nausea and unpleasant eructations are avoided.

**EVANS and LESCHNER**, London, Patentees. The above Capsules may be obtained of all Chemists and Medicine Vendors throughout the kingdom.

Ask for the Patent Flexible Capsules.

**THE MOST IMMEDIATE REMEDY FOR COUGHS and COLDS is HOLLOWAY'S PILLS.** This celebrated and extraordinary Medicine is not only an effectual cure for Coughs, Colds, Hoarseness, or even Loss of Voice, but is likewise a certain remedy in all cases of Wheezing, Shortness of Breath, and Asthma; and persons who may be so bad as not to be able to lie down in their beds, lest they be choked with phlegm, may be radically cured by these Pills, when every other means have failed. This latter class of sufferers may depend upon getting relief in the first three days, and in ten days they will sleep almost as well as ever they did in their lives. Sold by all Medicine Vendors, and at Professor HOLLOWAY'S Establishment, 244, Strand, London.

**For Purifying the Blood and Strengthening the Digestive Organs.**

**FRENCH'S SARSAPARILLA and CHAMOMILE.**—A Genuine Fluid Extract of these well-known valuable Medicines. It is suited for either sex, and will prove a certain cure for Indigestion, Loss of Appetite, Dimness of Sight, Fainting Fits, Wasting of the Flesh, Languor, Skin diseases, Rheumatic and Nervous affections, and all impurities of the Blood, caused by unhealthy climates, too sedentary a life, or other causes. By the diligent use of this purifying medicine the energies of the whole nervous system will be augmented, a more powerful, healthy action of every faculty produced, feebleness, and all the deplorable symptoms of disease will vanish, and strength and health be restored to the feeble and afflicted by its restorative properties. Price 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d., 11s., and 22s. each. Prepared only by **W. A. FRENCH**, Practical Chemist, 309, Holborn, two doors west of Chancery Lane.—The 11s. and 22s. sizes delivered carriage free to any part of England.

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Cash Boxes, and Japan Deed Boxes, Street Door Latches with very neat Keys.  
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**EASE and COMFORT IN SHAVING.**—**B. and S. COWVAN'S CANTON STROP**, or Quadrilateral Chinese Razor Sharpener, patronised by H.R.H. Prince Albert, renders shaving pleasant to a tender skin. The keenest edge may be given to the bluntest razor. Testimonials of its excellence have been received from that eminent surgeon, **Aston Key, Esq.**, as well as from other professional and scientific individuals. May be had of the inventors, **B. and S. COWVAN**, 164, Fenchurch Street, and of all perfumers, &c. Prices, 5s. 6d., 7s. 6d., and of all perfumers, &c. Prices, 1s. per packet: Vegetable shaving powder, 1s. 6d. per box, and peculiarly tempered razors, &c.

**WEAK LEGS, KNEES, AND ANKLES.**

**W. H. BAILEY** begs to remind the Nobility and Gentry, that he continues to make all kinds of Elastic Bandages for Weak Legs, &c. The following articles are kept ready made; Laced Stockings, Ankle-socks, Knee-caps, Trusses, Prolapsus Bandages, Crutches, Ladies' Belts, &c. **Mrs. BAILEY** attends Ladies at their own residences.



N.B. Instructions for measuring forwarded to all parts of the world.

Copy the address—418, Oxford-street, London.

**CAUTION.—MECHI'S MAGIC STROP.**—"The Real Magic Strop," "The Double Magic Strop," "The Magic Strop," are all base imitations of **MECHI'S MAGIC STROP**. None are genuine without Mech's name, which imitators dare not put on their spurious strop; yet strange to say, many perfumers, calling themselves respectable, endeavour to palm this rubbish (they cost from 3d. to 5d. each in Sheffield) on the public, as Mech's genuine strop, although they possess no sharpening properties whatever, but the very reverse. The well-known **Magic Paste** is an invaluable auxiliary to the strop, and its renovating properties are truly astonishing. **Mech's Razors** stand pre-eminent as well as his Table Cutlery.

**TO LADIES.**

The high and universal celebrity which

**ROWLAND'S KALYDOR**

continues to maintain as an active, yet mild and soothing extirpator of all impurities of the Skin, is, during the period of Spring, most pleasingly evinced. This preparation, eminently balsamic, restorative, and invigorating, is equally distinguished for safety in application, as for unfailing efficacy in eradicating all redness, tan, pimples, spots, freckles, discolorations, and other cutaneous visitations. The radiant bloom it imparts to the cheek, and the softness and delicacy which it induces on the hands and arms, render it indispensable to every toilet.

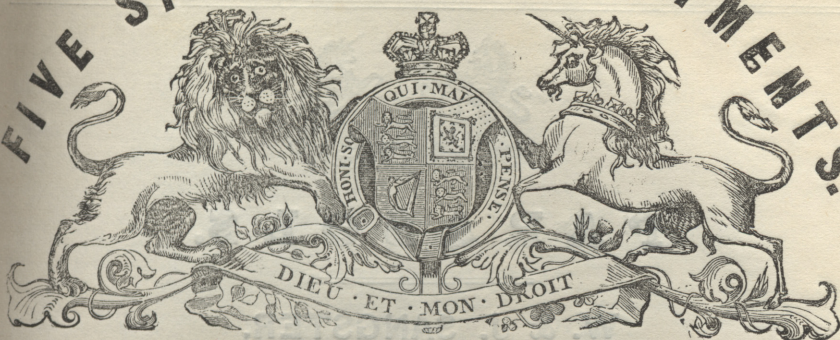
Its purifying and refreshing properties have obtained its exclusive selection by Her Majesty the Queen, the Court, and the Royal Family of Great Britain, and the several Courts of Europe.

\* Beware of spurious "KALYDORS" for sale, containing mineral astringents utterly ruinous to the Complexion, and by their repellent action endangering health. The words, "ROWLANDS' KALYDOR" are on the wrapper of the genuine articles. Price 4s. 6d. and 8s. 6d.

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Waterproofers, Habit Makers, and Tailors

TO

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H.R.H. Prince Albert, H.R.H. The Duchess of Kent,

KING LOUIS PHILIPPE,

And the ROYAL FAMILIES of ENGLAND and FRANCE.

The DOUDNEYS motto is "none but Good Articles can be cheap," and with this ever in view, they have, by increasing efforts, established a **Ready Money** business of great extent among the strong holds of the **old fashioned usurious Credit System**. As to the character, and commendatory influence of the approbation which has been bestowed upon their endeavours; let their **Five Royal Appointments**, and their **Patronage Book** filled with the **Royal, Illustrious, and Noble** names of their customers, testify.

The **New Patterns** for **Spring** and **Summer wear** are now ready for inspection at the **Old Prices**, so famous in seasons past, viz.:—Summer Waistcoats 7s. each, or 3 for 20s.—Summer Trousers 10s. 6d. per pair, or 3 for 30s.—Summer Coats, the beautiful light material 10s. 6d.—21s. and 30s.

The **Queens Victoria and Adelaide**, and the **Royal and Noble Duchesses** of Kent and Cambridge, Sutherland and Buccleuch, constantly wear Doudney's elegant **Registered Cloak**, in a variety of Waterproof, materials for Winter Wraps and the Promenade.—"Every Lady should see these graceful Garments." (*Vide Morning Post, September 26th.*) They surpass all others for School Cloaks for the sons and daughters.

**For Gentlemen.**—The **Royal Registered Cloak**, as made for **H.R.H. PRINCE ALBERT**, the **Nobility**, the **Army**, and **Navy**, and all who study **comfort**, coupled with a truly Gentlemanly exterior. These cloaks are pronounced by those who understand the matter, "**The most sensible Garment ever introduced**," at prices to suit all customers from the Superb down to the useful Guinea Cloak.

The **New Patent Belt** for Riding or general exercise, the only really effectual protection against rupture: the support commencing at the *bottom edge* of the belt, and producing an uniform upward pressure. They may be enlarged or tightened to the extent of six inches at pleasure, and never produce indigestion either in Ladies or Gentlemen. They are attached to Drawers with excellent effect. The most eminent of the Faculty are recommending these in preference to all others.

**LIVERIES.** Three Guineas the Plain Suit of Best Quality. *Ready Money* does it!!! and a very extensive practice among families of first distinction insures satisfactory results.

**Habit Makers by Special Appointment to Queen Victoria and the Ladies of the Court.** A Superfine Cloth Habit for 4 Guineas.

**Waterproof Irish Poplin.** The DOUDNEYS are the sole manufacturers of this beautiful article to HER MAJESTY AND THE PRINCE CONSORT. Gentlemen's Coats, Ladies' Cloaks, and lengths for Dresses can be obtained only at their Establishment.

**Country Gentlemen** wishing to be Respectably Dressed at low Prices should send for a Book of detail, self-measurement and all the System of business, or if 3 or 4 Gentlemen unite, a Traveller will wait upon them.

17, OLD BOND ST., 25, BURLINGTON ARCADE  
AND  
49, LOMBARD STREET—Established 1784.





## PARASOLS.

**W. & J. SANGSTER,**



In returning thanks to the Nobility and Gentry for the great patronage they have received for so many years, beg to inform them, that they have made up for this season, a very large assortment of SYLPHIDE and every other description of PARASOLS, both for the Carriage and Promenade, in plain silks and the richest watered silks and satins. They have applied to most of them, that convenient invention, the INDIAN, which keeps a Parasol closed without the trouble of any fastening, which was so generally admired last season.



## PATENT ALPACA UMBRELLA.

**W. & J. SANGSTER** beg to announce that they have obtained **HER MAJESTY'S LETTERS PATENT** for England and Scotland, for the application of **ALPACA** of a peculiar make to **UMBRELLAS**.

This beautiful material, so closely resembling silk, and known to be far more durable, is peculiarly adapted for an **UMBRELLA**, whilst the price is little more than that of **COTTON**.

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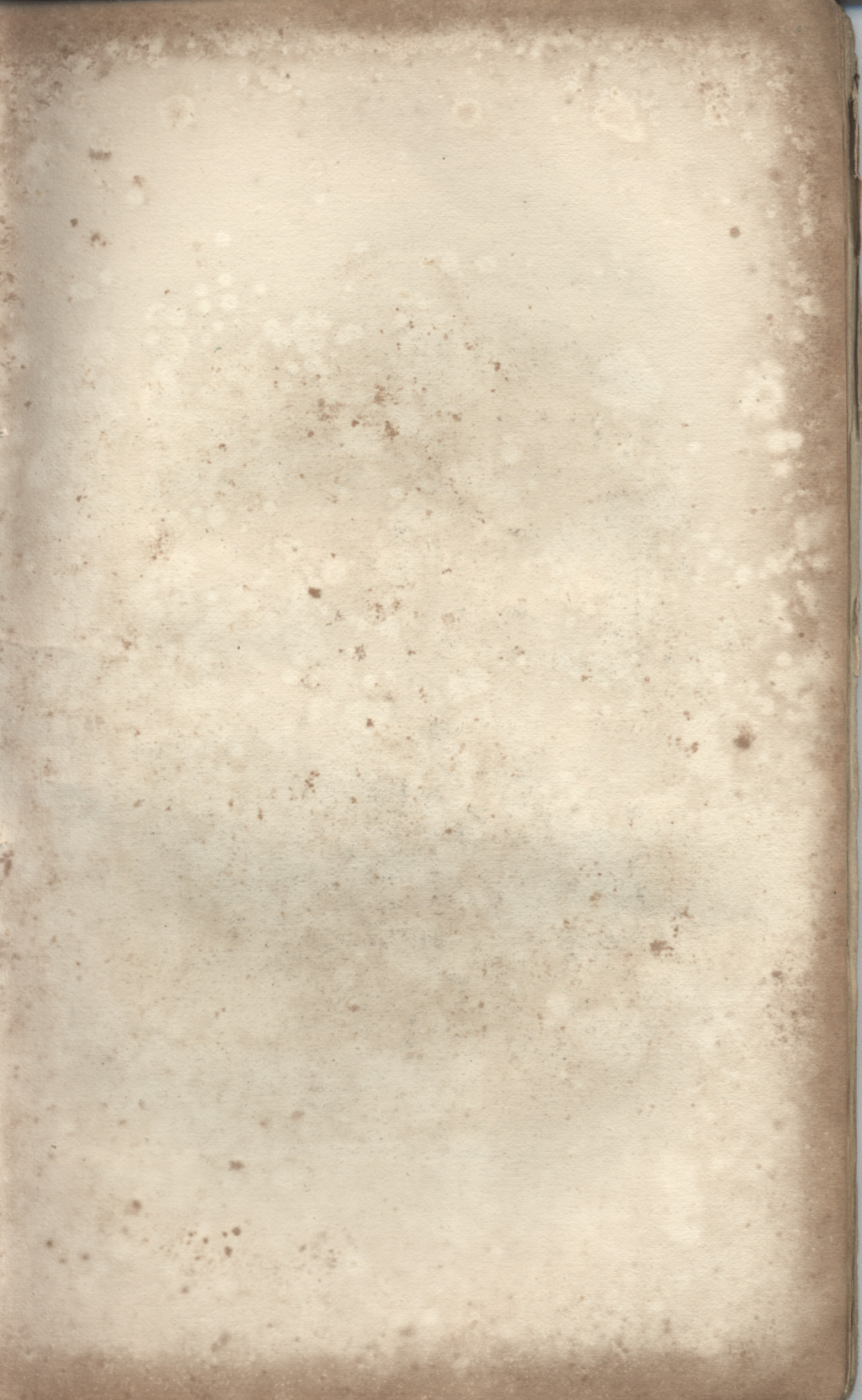




J. P. W.

*"Let him remember it in that room, years to come!"*

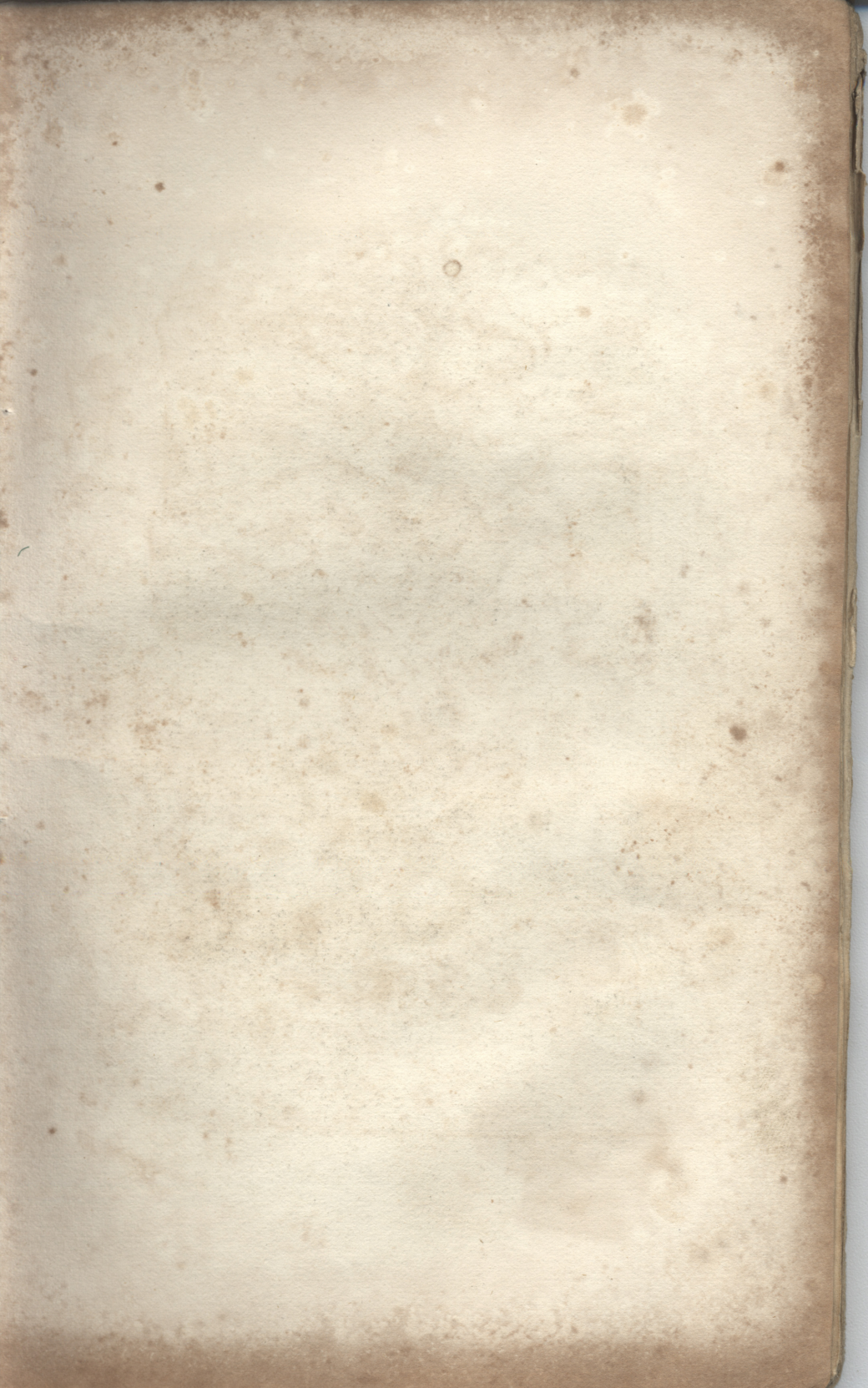


















DEALINGS WITH THE FIRM  
OF  
DOMBEY AND SON,  
Wholesale, Retail and for Exportation.

BY

*Charles Dickens.*



LONDON.

BRADBURY & EVANS, BOUVERIE STREET.

1848







CHAPTER LVIII.

AFTER A LAPSE.

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CHAPTER LVIII.

AFTER A LAPSE.

THE sea had ebbcd and flowcd, through a whole year. Through a whole year, the winds and clouds had come and gone; the ceaseless work of Time had been performed, in storm and sunshine. Through a whole year the tides of human chance and change had set in their allotted courses. Through a whole year, the famous House of Dombey and Son had fought a fight for life, against cross accidents, doubtful rumours, unsuccessful ventures, unpropitious times, and most of all, against the infatuation of its head, who would not contract its enterprises by a hair's breadth, and would not listen to a word of warning that the ship he strained so hard against the storm, was weak, and could not bear it.

The year was out, and the great House was down.

One summer afternoon; a year, wanting some odd days, after the marriage in the City church; there was a buzz and whisper upon 'Change of a great failure. A certain cold proud man, well known there, was not there, nor was he represented there. Next day it was noised abroad that Dombey and Son had stopped, and next night there was a List of Bankrupts published, headed by that name.

The world was very busy now, in sooth, and had a deal to say. It was an innocently credulous, and a much ill used world. It was a world in which there was no other sort of bankruptcy whatever. There were no conspicuous people in it, trading far and wide on rotten banks of religion, patriotism, virtue, honour. There was no amount worth mentioning of mere paper in circulation, on which anybody lived pretty handsomely, promising to pay great sums of goodness with no effects. There were no short-comings anywhere, in anything but money. The world was very angry indeed; and the people especially, who, in a worse world, might have been supposed to be bankrupt traders themselves in shows and pretences, were observed to be mightily indignant.

Here was a new inducement to dissipation, presented to that sport of circumstances, Mr. Perch the messenger! It was apparently the fate of Mr. Perch to be always waking up, and finding himself famous. He had but yesterday, as one might say, subsided into private life from the celebrity of the elopement and the events that followed it; and now he was made a more important man than ever, by the bankruptcy. Gliding from his bracket in the outer office where he now sat, watching the strange faces of accountants and others, who quickly superseded nearly all the old clerks, Mr. Perch had but to show himself in the court outside, or, at farthest, in the bar of the King's Arms, to be asked a multitude of questions, almost certain to include that interesting question, what would he take to drink? Then would Mr. Perch descant upon the hours of acute uneasiness he and Mrs. Perch had suffered out at Ball's Pond, when they first suspected "things was going wrong." Then would Mr. Perch relate to gaping



listeners, in a low voice, as if the corpse of the deceased House were lying unburied in the next room, how Mrs. Perch had first come to surmise that things *was* going wrong, by hearing him (Perch) moaning in his sleep, "twelve and ninepence in the pound, twelve and ninepence in the pound!" Which act of somnambulism he supposed to have originated in the impression made upon him by the change in Mr. Dombey's face. Then would he inform them how he had once said, "Might I make so bold as ask, Sir, are you unhappy in your mind?" and how Mr. Dombey had replied, "My faithful Perch—but no, it cannot be!" and with that had struck his hand upon his forehead, and said, "Leave me, Perch!" Then, in short, would Mr. Perch, a victim to his position, tell all manner of lies; affecting himself to tears by those that were of a moving nature, and really believing that the inventions of yesterday, had, on repetition, a sort of truth about them to-day.

Mr. Perch always closed these conferences by meekly remarking, That, of course, whatever his suspicions might have been (as if he had ever had any!), it wasn't for *him* to betray his trust—was it? Which sentiment (there never being any creditors present), was received as doing great honour to his feelings. Thus, he generally brought away a soothed conscience and left an agreeable impression behind him, when he returned to his bracket: again to sit watching the strange faces of the accountants and others, making so free with the great mysteries, the Books; or now and then to go on tiptoe into Mr. Dombey's empty room, and stir the fire; or to take an airing at the door, and have a little more doleful chat with any straggler whom he knew; or to propitiate, with various small attentions, the head accountant: from whom Mr. Perch had expectations of a messengership in a Fire-Office, when the affairs of the House should be wound up.

To Major Bagstock, the bankruptcy was quite a calamity. The Major was not a sympathetic character—his attention being wholly concentrated on J. B.—nor was he a man subject to lively emotions, except in the physical regards of gasping and choking. But he had so paraded his friend Dombey at the club; had so flourished him at the heads of the members in general, and so put them down by continual assertion of his riches; that the club, being but human, was delighted to retort upon the Major, by asking him, with a show of great concern, whether this tremendous smash had been at all expected, and how his friend Dombey bore it. To such questions, the Major, waxing very purple, would reply that it was a bad world, Sir, altogether; that Joey knew a thing or two, but had been done, Sir, done like an infant; that if you had foretold this, Sir, to J. Bagstock, when he went abroad with Dombey and was chasing that vagabond up and down France, J. Bagstock would have pooh-pooh'd you—would have pooh-pooh'd you, Sir, by the Lord! That Joe had been deceived, Sir, taken in, hoodwinked, blindfolded, but was broad awake again and staring; insomuch, Sir, that if Joe's father were to rise up from the grave to-morrow, he wouldn't trust the old blade with a penny piece, but would tell him that his son Josh was too old a soldier to be done again, Sir. That he was a suspicious, crabbed, cranky, used-up, J. B. infidel, Sir; and that if it were consistent with the dignity of a rough and tough old Major, of the old school, who had had the honour of being personally known to, and commended by, their late Royal Highnesses the



Dukes of Kent and York, to retire to a tub and live in it, by Gad! Sir, he'd have a tub in Pall Mall to-morrow, to show his contempt for mankind!

Of all this, and many variations of the same tune, the Major would deliver himself with so many apoplectic symptoms, such rollings of his head, and such violent growls of ill usage and resentment, that the younger members of the club surmised he had invested money in his friend Dombey's House, and lost it; though the older soldiers and deeper dogs, who knew Joe better, would'nt hear of such a thing. The unfortunate Native, expressing no opinion, suffered dreadfully; not merely in his moral feelings, which were regularly fusilladed by the Major every hour in the day, and riddled through and through, but in his sensitiveness to bodily knocks and bumps, which was kept continually on the stretch. For six entire weeks after the bankruptcy, this miserable foreigner lived in a rainy season of boot-jacks and brushes.

Mrs. Chick had three ideas upon the subject of the terrible reverse. The first was that she could not understand it. The second, that her brother had not made an effort. The third, that if she had been invited to dinner on the day of that first party, it never would have happened; and that she had said so, at the time.

Nobody's opinion stayed the misfortune, lightened it, or made it heavier. It was understood that the affairs of the House were to be wound up as they best could be; that Mr. Dombey freely resigned everything he had, and asked for no favour from any one. That any resumption of the business was out of the question, as he would listen to no friendly negotiation having that compromise in view; that he had relinquished every post of trust or distinction he had held, as a man respected among merchants; that he was dying, according to some; that he was going melancholy mad, according to others; that he was a broken man, according to all.

The clerks dispersed after holding a little dinner of condolence among themselves, which was enlivened by comic singing, and went off admirably. Some took places abroad, and some engaged in other Houses at home; some looked up relations in the country, for whom they suddenly remembered they had a particular affection, and some advertised for employment in the newspapers: Mr. Perch alone remained of all the late establishment, sitting on his bracket looking at the accountants, or starting off it, to propitiate the head accountant, who was to get him into the Fire Office. The Counting House soon got to be dirty and neglected. The principal slipper and dogs' collar seller, at the corner of the court, would have doubted the propriety of throwing up his forefinger to the brim of his hat, any more, if Mr. Dombey had appeared there now; and the ticket porter, with his hands under his white apron, moralised good sound morality about ambition, which (he observed) was not, in his opinion, made to rhyme to perdition, for nothing.

Mr. Morfin the hazel-eyed bachelor, with the hair and whiskers sprinkled with grey, was perhaps the only person within the atmosphere of the House—its head, of course, excepted—who was heartily and deeply affected by the disaster that had befallen it. He had treated Mr. Dombey with due respect and deference through many years, but he had



never disguised his natural character, or meanly truckled to him, or pampered his master passion for the advancement of his own purposes. He had, therefore, no self-disrespect to avenge; no long tightened springs to release with a quick recoil. He worked early and late to unravel whatever was complicated or difficult in the records of the transactions of the House; was always in attendance to explain whatever required explanation; sat in his old room sometimes very late at night, studying points by his mastery of which he could spare Mr. Dombey the pain of being personally referred to; and then would go home to Islington, and calm his mind by producing the most dismal and forlorn sounds out of his violoncello before going to bed.

He was solacing himself with this melodious grumbler one evening, and, having been much dispirited by the proceedings of the day, was scraping consolation out of its deepest notes, when his landlady (who was fortunately deaf, and had no other consciousness of these performances than a sensation of something rumbling in her bones) announced a lady.

"In mourning," she said.

The violoncello stopped immediately; and the performer, laying it on a sofa with great tenderness and care, made a sign that the lady was to come in. He followed directly, and met Harriet Carker on the stair.

"Alone!" he said, "and John here, this morning! Is there anything the matter, my dear? But no," he added, "your face tells quite another story."

"I am afraid it is a selfish revelation that you see there, then," she answered.

"It is a very pleasant one," said he; "and, if selfish, a novelty too, worth seeing in you. But I don't believe that."

He had placed a chair for her by this time, and sat down opposite; the violoncello lying snugly on the sofa between them.

"You will not be surprised at my coming alone, or at John's not having told you I was coming," said Harriet; "and you *will* believe that, when I tell you why I have come. May I do so now?"

"You can do nothing better."

"You were not busy?"

He pointed to the violoncello lying on the sofa, and said, "I have been, all day. Here's my witness. I have been confiding all my cares to it. I wish I had none but my own to tell."

"Is the House at an end?" said Harriet, earnestly.

"Completely at an end."

"Will it never be resumed?"

"Never."

The bright expression of her face was not overshadowed as her lips silently repeated the word. He seemed to observe this with some little involuntary surprise, and said again:

"Never. You remember what I told you. It has been, all along, impossible to convince him; impossible to reason with him; sometimes, impossible even to approach him. The worst has happened; and the House has fallen, never to be built up any more."

"And Mr. Dombey, is he personally ruined?"

"Ruined."



"Will he have no private fortune left? Nothing?"

A certain eagerness in her voice, and something that was almost joyful in her look, seemed to surprise him more and more; to disappoint him too, and jar discordantly against his own emotions. He drummed with the fingers of one hand on the table, looking wistfully at her, and shaking his head, said, after a pause:

"The extent of Mr. Dombey's resources is not accurately within my knowledge; but though they are doubtless very large, his obligations are enormous. He is a gentleman of high honour and integrity. Any man in his position could, and many a man in his position would, have saved himself, by making terms which would have very slightly, almost insensibly, increased the losses of those who had had dealings with him, and left him a remnant to live upon. But he is resolved on payment to the last farthing of his means. His own words are, that they will clear, or nearly clear, the House, and that no one can lose much. Ah Miss Harriet, it would do us no harm to remember oftener than we do, that vices are sometimes only virtues carried to excess! His pride shows well in this."

She heard him with little or no change in her expression, and with a divided attention that showed her to be busy with something in her own mind. When he was silent, she asked him hurriedly:

"Have you seen him lately?"

"No one sees him. When this crisis of his affairs renders it necessary for him to come out of his house, he comes out for the occasion, and again goes home, and shuts himself up, and will see no one. He has written me a letter, acknowledging our past connexion in higher terms than it deserved, and parting from me. I am delicate of obtruding myself upon him now, never having had much intercourse with him in better times; but I have tried to do so. I have written, gone there, entreated. Quite in vain."

He watched her, as in the hope that she would testify some greater concern than she had yet shown; and spoke gravely and feelingly, as if to impress her the more; but there was no change in her.

"Well, well, Miss Harriet," he said, with a disappointed air, "this is not to the purpose. You have not come here to hear this. Some other and pleasanter theme is in your mind. Let it be in mine, too, and we shall talk upon more equal terms. Come!"

"No, it is the same theme," returned Harriet, with frank and quick surprise. "Is it not likely that it should be? Is it not natural that John and I should have been thinking and speaking very much of late of these great changes? Mr. Dombey, whom he served so many years—you know upon what terms—reduced, as you describe; and we quite rich!"

Good, true face, as that face of her's was, and pleasant as it had been to him, Mr. Morfin, the hazel-eyed bachelor, since the first time he had ever looked upon it, it pleased him less at that moment, lighted with a ray of exultation, than it had ever pleased him before.

"I need not remind you," said Harriet, casting down her eyes upon her black dress, "through what means our circumstances changed. You have not forgotten that our brother James, upon that dreadful day, left no will, no relations but ourselves."

The face was pleasanter to him now, though it was pale and melancholy, than it had been a moment since. He seemed to breathe more cheerily.



"You know," she said, "our history, the history of both my brothers, in connexion with the unfortunate, unhappy gentleman, of whom you have spoken so truly. You know how few our wants are—John's and mine—and what little use we have for money, after the life we have led together for so many years; and now that he is earning an income that is ample for us, through your kindness. You are not unprepared to hear what favour I have come to ask of you?"

"I hardly know. I was, a minute ago. Now, I think, I am not."

"Of my dead brother I say nothing. If the dead know what we do—but you understand me. Of my living brother I could say much; but what need I say more, than that this act of duty, in which I have come to ask your indispensable assistance, is his own, and that he cannot rest until it is performed!"

She raised her eyes again; and the light of exultation in her face began to appear beautiful, in the observant eyes that watched her.

"Dear Sir," she went on to say, "it must be done very quietly and secretly. Your experience and knowledge will point out a way of doing it. Mr. Dombey may, perhaps, be led to believe that it is something saved, unexpectedly, from the wreck of his fortunes; or that it is a voluntary tribute to his honourable and upright character, from some of those with whom he has had great dealings; or that it is some old lost debt repaid. There must be many ways of doing it. I know you will choose the best. The favour I have come to ask is, that you will do it for us in your own kind, generous, considerate manner. That you will never speak of it to John, whose chief happiness in this act of restitution is to do it secretly, unknown, and unapproved of; that only a very small part of the inheritance may be reserved to us, until Mr. Dombey shall have possessed the interest of the rest for the remainder of his life; that you will keep our secret, faithfully—but that I am sure you will; and that, from this time, it may seldom be whispered, even between you and me, but may live in my thoughts only as a new reason for thankfulness to Heaven, and joy and pride in my brother."

Such a look of exultation there may be on Angels' faces, when the one repentant sinner enters Heaven, among ninety-nine just men. It was not dimmed or tarnished by the joyful tears that filled her eyes, but was the brighter for them.

"My dear Harriet," said Mr. Morfin, after a silence, "I was not prepared for this. Do I understand you that you wish to make your own part in the inheritance available for your good purpose, as well as John's?"

"Oh yes," she returned. "When we have shared everything together for so long a time, and have had no care, hope, or purpose apart, could I bear to be excluded from my share in this? May I not urge a claim to be my brother's partner and companion to the last?"

"Heaven forbid that I should dispute it!" he replied.

"We may rely on your friendly help?" she said. "I knew we might!"

"I should be a worse man than,—than I hope I am, or would willingly believe myself, if I could not give you that assurance from my heart and soul. You may, implicitly. Upon my honour, I will keep your secret



And if it should be found that Mr. Dombey is so reduced as I fear he will be, acting on a determination that there seem to be no means of influencing, I will assist you to accomplish the design, on which you and John are jointly resolved."

She gave him her hand, and thanked him with a cordial, happy face.

"Harriet," he said, detaining it in his. "To speak to you of the worth of any sacrifice that you can make now—above all, of any sacrifice of mere money—would be idle and presumptuous. To put before you any appeal to reconsider your purpose or to set narrow limits to it, would be, I feel, not less so. I have no right to mar the great end of a great history, by any obtrusion of my own weak self. I have every right to bend my head before what you confide to me, satisfied that it comes from a higher and better source of inspiration than my poor worldly knowledge. I will say only this, I am your faithful steward; and I would rather be so, and your chosen friend, than I would be anybody in the world, except yourself."

She thanked him again, cordially, and wished him good night.

"Are you going home?" he said. "Let me go with you."

"Not to-night. I am not going home now; I have a visit to make alone. Will you come to-morrow?"

"Well, well," said he, "I'll come to-morrow. In the meantime, I'll think of this, and how we can best proceed. And perhaps *you'll* think of it, dear Harriet, and—and—think of me a little in connexion with it."

He handed her down to a coach she had in waiting at the door; and if his landlady had not been deaf, she would have heard him muttering as he went back up stairs, when the coach had driven off, that we were creatures of habit, and it was a sorrowful habit to be an old bachelor.

The violoncello lying on the sofa between the two chairs, he took it up, without putting away the vacant chair, and sat droning on it, and slowly shaking his head at the vacant chair, for a long, long time. The expression he communicated to the instrument at first, though monstrously pathetic and bland, was nothing to the expression he communicated to his own face, and bestowed upon the empty chair: which was so sincere, that he was obliged to have recourse to Captain Cuttle's remedy more than once, and to rub his face with his sleeve. By degrees, however, the violoncello, in unison with his own frame of mind, glided melodiously into the Harmonious Blacksmith, which he played over and over again, until his ruddy and serene face gleamed like true metal on the anvil of a veritable blacksmith. In fine, the violoncello and the empty chair were the companions of his bachelorhood until nearly midnight; and when he took his supper, the violoncello set up on end in the sofa corner, big with the latent harmony of a whole foundry full of harmonious blacksmiths, seemed to ogle the empty chair out of its crooked eyes, with unutterable intelligence.

When Harriet left the house, the driver of her hired coach, taking a course that was evidently no new one to him, went in and out by bye-ways, through that part of the suburbs, until he arrived at some open ground, where there were a few quiet little old houses standing among gardens. At the garden-gate of one of these he stopped, and Harriet alighted.

Her gentle ringing at the bell was responded to by a dolorous-looking



woman, of light complexion, with raised eyebrows, and head drooping on one side, who curtsied at sight of her, and conducted her across the garden to the house.

"How is your patient, nurse, to-night?" said Harriet.

"In a poor way, Miss, I am afraid. Oh how she do remind me, sometimes, of my uncle's Betsey Jane!" returned the woman of the light complexion, in a sort of doleful rapture.

"In what respect?" asked Harriet.

"Miss, in all respects," replied the other, "except that she's grown up, and Betsey Jane, when at death's door, was but a child."

"But you have told me she recovered," observed Harriet mildly; "so there is the more reason for hope, Mrs. Wickam."

"Ah, Miss, hope is an excellent thing for such as has the spirits to bear it!" said Mrs. Wickam, shaking her head. "My own spirits is not equal to it, but I don't owe it any grudge. I envys them that is so blest!"

"You should try to be more cheerful," remarked Harriet.

"Thank you, Miss, I'm sure," said Mrs. Wickam grimly. "If I was so inclined, the loneliness of this situation—you'll excuse my speaking so free—would put it out of my power, in four and twenty hours; but I an't at all. I'd rather not. The little spirits that I ever had, I was bereaved of at Brighton some few years ago, and I think I feel myself the better for it."

In truth, this was the very Mrs. Wickam who had superseded Mrs. Richards as the nurse of little Paul, and who considered herself to have gained the loss in question, under the roof of the amiable Pipchin. The excellent and thoughtful old system, hallowed by long prescription, which has usually picked out from the rest of mankind the most dreary and uncomfortable people that could possibly be laid hold of, to act as instructors of youth, finger-posts to the virtues, matrons, monitors, attendants on sick beds, and the like, had established Mrs. Wickam in very good business as a nurse, and had led to her serious qualities being particularly commended by an admiring and numerous connexion.

Mrs. Wickam, with her eyebrows elevated, and her head on one side, lighted the way up-stairs to a clean, neat, chamber, opening on another chamber dimly lighted, where there was a bed. In the first room, an old woman sat mechanically staring out at the open window, on the darkness. In the second, stretched upon the bed, lay the shadow of a figure that had spurned the wind and rain, one wintry night; hardly to be recognised now, but by the long black hair that showed so very black against the colourless face, and all the white things about it.

Oh, the strong eyes, and the weak frame! The eyes that turned so eagerly and brightly to the door when Harriet came in; the feeble head that could not raise itself, and moved so slowly round upon its pillow!

"Alice!" said the visitor's mild voice, "am I late to-night?"

"You always seem late, but are always early."

Harriet had sat down by the bedside now, and put her hand upon the thin hand lying there.

"You are better?"

Mrs. Wickam, standing at the foot of the bed, like a disconsolate spectre, most decidedly and forcibly shook her head to negative this position.



"It matters very little!" said Alice, with a faint smile. "Better or worse to-day, is but a day's difference—perhaps not so much."

Mrs. Wickam, as a serious character, expressed her approval with a groan; and having made some cold dabs at the bottom of the bed-clothes, as feeling for the patient's feet and expecting to find them stoney, went clinking among the medicine bottles on the table, as who should say, "while we *are* here, let us repeat the mixture as before."

"No," said Alice, whispering to her visitor, "evil courses, and remorse, travel, want, and weather, storm within and storm without, have worn my life away. It will not last much longer."

She drew the hand up as she spoke, and laid her face against it.

"I lie here, sometimes, thinking I should like to live until I had had a little time to show you how grateful I could be! It is a weakness, and soon passes. Better for you as it is. Better for me!"

How different her hold upon the hand, to what it had been when she took it by the fireside on the bleak winter evening! Scorn, rage, defiance, recklessness, look here! This is the end.

Mrs. Wickam having clinked sufficiently among the bottles, now produced the mixture. Mrs. Wickam looked hard at her patient in the act of drinking, screwed her mouth up tight, her eyebrows also, and shook her head, expressing that tortures shouldn't make her say it was a hopeless case. Mrs. Wickam then sprinkled a little cooling-stuff about the room, with the air of a female grave-digger, who was strewing ashes on ashes, dust on dust—for she was a serious character—and withdrew to partake of certain funeral baked meats down stairs.

"How long is it," asked Alice, "since I went to you and told you what I had done, and when you were advised it was too late for any one to follow?"

"It is a year and more," said Harriet.

"A year and more," said Alice, thoughtfully intent upon her face.

"Months upon months since you brought me here!"

Harriet answered "Yes."

"Brought me here, by force of gentleness and kindness. Me!" said Alice, shrinking with her face behind the hand, "and made me human by woman's looks and words, and angel's deeds!"

Harriet bending over her, composed and soothed her. Bye and bye, Alice lying as before, with the hand against her face, asked to have her mother called.

Harriet called to her more than once; but the old woman was so absorbed looking out at the open window on the darkness, that she did not hear. It was not until Harriet went to her and touched her, that she rose up, and came.

"Mother," said Alice, taking the hand again, and fixing her lustrous eyes lovingly upon her visitor, while she merely addressed a motion of her finger to the old woman, "tell her what you know."

"To-night, my deary?"

"Aye, mother," answered Alice, faintly and solemnly, "to-night!"

The old woman, whose wits appeared disordered by alarm, remorse, or grief, came creeping along the side of the bed, opposite to that on which Harriet sat; and kneeling down, so as to bring her withered face upon a



level with the coverlet, and stretching out her hand, so as touch her daughter's arm, began :

"My handsome gal—"

Heaven what a cry was that, with which she stopped there, gazing at the poor form lying on the bed!

"Changed, long ago, mother! Withered, long ago," said Alice, without looking at her. "Don't grieve for that now."

"—My daughter," faltered the old woman, "my gal who 'll soon get better, and shame 'em all with her good looks."

Alice smiled mournfully at Harriet, and fondled her hand a little closer, but said nothing.

"Who 'll soon get better, I say," repeated the old woman, menacing the vacant air with her shrivelled fist, "and who 'll shame 'em all with her good looks—she will. I say she will! she shall!—" as if she were in passionate contention with some unseen opponent at the bedside, who contradicted her—"my daughter has been turned away from, and cast out, but she could boast relationship to proud folks too, if she chose. Ah! To proud folks! There's relationship without your clergy and your wedding rings—they may make it, but they can't break it—and my daughter's well related. Show me Mrs. Dombey, and I'll show you my Alice's first cousin."

Harriet glanced from the old woman to the lustrous eyes intent upon her face, and derived corroboration from them.

"What!" cried the old woman, her nodding head bridling with a ghastly vanity; "Though I am old and ugly now,—much older by life and habit than years though,—I was once as young as any. Ah! as pretty too, as many! I was a fresh country wench in my time, darling," stretching out her arm to Harriet, across the bed, "and looked it, too. Down in my country, Mrs. Dombey's father and his brother were the gayest gentlemen and the best-liked that come a visiting from London—they have long been dead, though! Lord, Lord, this long while! The brother, who was my Ally's father, longest of the two."

She raised her head a little, and peered at her daughter's face; as if from the remembrance of her own youth, she had flown to the remembrance of her child's. Then, suddenly, she laid her face down on the bed, and shut her head up in her hands and arms.

"They were as like," said the old woman, without looking up, "as you could see two brothers, so near an age—there wasn't much more than a year between them, as I recollect—and if you could have seen my gal, as I have seen her once, side by side with the other's daughter, you'd have seen, for all the difference of dress and life, that they were like each other. Oh! is the likeness gone, and is it my gal—only my gal—that's to change so!"

"We shall all change, mother, in our turn," said Alice.

"Turn!" cried the old woman, "but why not her's as soon as my gal's! The mother must have changed—she looked as old as me, and full as wrinkled through her paint—but *she* was handsome. What have *I* done, I, what have *I* done worse than her, that only my gal is to lie there fading!"

With another of those wild cries, she went running out into the room



from which she had come; but immediately, in her uncertain mood, returned, and creeping up to Harriet, said:

"That's what Alice bade me tell you, deary. That's all. I found it out when I began to ask who she was, and all about her, away in Warwickshire there, one summer time. Such relations was no good to me, then. They wouldn't have owned me, and had nothing to give me. I should have asked 'em, maybe, for a little money, afterwards, if it hadn't been for my Alice; she'd a'most have killed me, if I had, I think. She was as proud as t' other in her way," said the old woman, touching the face of her daughter fearfully, and withdrawing her hand, "for all she's so quiet now; but she'll shame 'em with her good looks, yet. Ha, ha! *She'll* shame 'em, will my handsome daughter!"

Her laugh, as she retreated, was worse than her cry; worse than the burst of imbecile lamentation in which it ended; worse than the doting air with which she sat down in her old seat, and stared out at the darkness.

The eyes of Alice had all this time been fixed on Harriet, whose hand she had never released. She said now:

"I have felt, lying here, that I should like you to know this. It might explain, I have thought, something that used to help to harden me. I had heard so much, in my wrong-doing, of my neglected duty, that I took up with the belief that duty had not been done to me, and that as the seed was sown, the harvest grew. I somehow made it out that when ladies had bad homes and mothers, they went wrong in their way, too; but that their way was not so foul a one as mine, and they had need to bless God for it. That is all past. It is like a dream, now, which I cannot quite remember or understand. It has been more and more like a dream, every day, since you began to sit here, and to read to me. I only tell it you, as I can recollect it. Will you read to me a little more?"

Harriet was withdrawing her hand to open the book, when Alice detained it for a moment.

"You will not forget my mother? I forgive her, if I have any cause. I know that she forgives me, and is sorry in her heart. You will not forget her?"

"Never, Alice!"

"A moment yet. Lay my head so, dear, that as you read, I may see the words in your kind face."

Harriet complied and read—read the eternal book for all the weary, and the heavy-laden; for all the wretched, fallen, and neglected of this earth—read the blessed history, in which the blind, lame, palsied beggar, the criminal, the woman stained with shame, the shunned of all our dainty clay, has each a portion, that no human pride, indifference, or sophistry through all the ages that this world shall last, can take away, or by the thousandth atom of a grain reduce—read the ministry of Him, who, through the round of human life, and all its hopes and griefs, from birth to death, from infancy to age, had sweet compassion for, and interest in, its every scene and stage, its every suffering and sorrow.

"I shall come," said Harriet, when she shut the book, "very early in the morning."

The lustrous eyes, yet fixed upon her face, closed for a moment, then opened; and Alice kissed, and blest her.



The same eyes followed her to the door; and in their light, and on the tranquil face, there was a smile when it was closed.

They never turned away. She laid her hand upon her breast, murmuring the sacred name that had been read to her; and life passed from her face, like light removed.

Nothing lay there, any longer, but the ruin of the mortal house on which the rain had beaten, and the black hair that had fluttered in the wintry wind.

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## CHAPTER LIX.

### RETRIBUTION.

CHANGES have come again upon the great house in the long dull street, once the scene of Florence's childhood and loneliness. It is a great house still, proof against wind and weather, without breaches in the roof, or shattered windows, or dilapidated walls; but it is a ruin none the less, and the rats fly from it.

Mr. Towlinson and company are, at first, incredulous in respect of the shapeless rumours that they hear. Cook says our people's credit ain't so easy shook as that comes to, thank God; and Mr. Towlinson expects to hear it reported next, that the Bank of England's a going to break, or the jewels in the Tower to be sold up. But, next come the Gazette, and Mr. Perch; and Mr. Perch brings Mrs. Perch to talk it over in the kitchen, and to spend a pleasant evening.

As soon as there is no doubt about it, Mr. Towlinson's main anxiety is that the failure should be a good round one—not less than a hundred thousand pound. Mr. Perch don't think himself that a hundred thousand pound will nearly cover it. The women, led by Mrs. Perch and Cook, often repeat "a hun-dred thou-sand pound!" with awful satisfaction—as if handling the words were like handling the money; and the housemaid, who has her eye on Mr. Towlinson, wishes she had only a hundredth part of the sum to bestow on the man of her choice. Mr. Towlinson, still mindful of his old wrong, opines that a foreigner would hardly know what to do with so much money, unless he spent it on his whiskers; which bitter sarcasm causes the housemaid to withdraw in tears.

But not to remain long absent; for Cook, who has the reputation of being extremely good-hearted, says, whatever they do, let 'em stand by one another now, Towlinson, for there's no telling how soon they may be divided. They have been in that house (says Cook) through a funeral, a wedding, and a running-away; and let it not be said that they couldn't agree among themselves at such a time as the present. Mrs. Perch is immensely affected by this moving address, and openly remarks that Cook is an angel. Mr. Towlinson replies to Cook, far be it from him to stand in the way of that good feeling which he could wish to see; and adjourning in quest of the housemaid, and presently returning with that young lady on his arm, informs the kitchen that foreigners is only his fun, and that him and Anne have now resolved to take one another for better for



worse, and to settle in Oxford Market in the general green grocery and herb and leech line, where your kind favours is particular requested. This announcement is received with acclamation; and Mrs. Perch, projecting her soul into futurity, says, "girls," in Cook's ear, in a solemn whisper.

Misfortune in the family without feasting, in these lower regions, couldn't be. Therefore Cook tosses up a hot dish or two for supper, and Mr. Towlinson compounds a lobster salad to be devoted to the same hospitable purpose. Even Mrs. Pipchin, agitated by the occasion, rings her bell, and sends down word that she requests to have that little bit of sweetbread that was left, warmed up for her supper, and sent to her on a tray with about a quarter of a tumbler-full of mulled sherry; for she feels poorly.

There is a little talk about Mr. Dombey, but very little. It is chiefly speculation as to how long he has known that this was going to happen. Cook says shrewdly, "Oh a long time, bless you! Take your oath of that." And reference being made to Mr. Perch, he confirms her view of the case. Somebody wonders what he'll do, and whether he'll go out in any situation. Mr. Towlinson thinks not, and hints at a refuge in one of them gen-teel almshouses of the better kind. "Ah! Where he'll have his little garden, you know," says Cook, plaintively, "and bring up sweet-peas in the spring." "Exactly so," says Mr. Towlinson, "and be one of the Brethren of something or another." "We are all brethren," says Mrs. Perch, in a pause of her drink. "Except the sisters," says Mr. Perch. "How are the mighty fallen!" remarks Cook. "Pride shall have a fall, and it always was and will be so!" observes the housemaid.

It is wonderful how good they feel, in making these reflections; and what a Christian unanimity they are sensible of, in bearing the common shock with resignation. There is only one interruption to this excellent state of mind, which is occasioned by a young kitchenmaid of inferior rank—in black stockings—who, having sat with her mouth open for a long time, unexpectedly discharges from it words to this effect, "Suppose the wages shouldn't be paid!" The company sit for a moment speechless; but Cook, recovering first, turns upon the young woman, and requests to know how she dares insult the family, whose bread she eats, by such a dishonest supposition, and whether she thinks that anybody, with a scrap of honour left, could deprive poor servants of their pittance? "Because if *that* is your religious feelings, Mary Daws," says Cook, warmly, "I don't know where you mean to go to."

Mr. Towlinson don't know either; nor anybody; and the young kitchenmaid, appearing not to know exactly, herself, and scouted by the general voice, is covered with confusion, as with a garment.

After a few days, strange people begin to call at the house, and to make appointments with one another in the dining-room, as if they lived there. Especially, there is a gentleman, of a Mosaic Arabian cast of countenance, with a very massive watch-guard, who whistles in the drawing-room, and, while he is waiting for the other gentleman, who always has pen and ink in his pocket, asks Mr. Towlinson (by the easy name of "Old Cook,") if he happens to know what the figure of them crimson and gold hangings might have been, when new bought. The



callers and appointments in the dining-room become more numerous every day, and every gentleman seems to have pen and ink in his pocket, and to have some occasion to use it. At last it is said that there is going to be a Sale; and then more people arrive, with pen and ink in their pockets, commanding a detachment of men with carpet caps, who immediately begin to pull up the carpets, and knock the furniture about, and to print off thousands of impressions of their shoes upon the hall and staircase.

The council down stairs are in full conclave all this time, and, having nothing to do, perform perfect feats of eating. At length they are one day summoned in a body to Mrs. Pipchin's room, and thus addressed by the fair Peruvian:

"Your master's in difficulties," says Mrs. Pipchin, tartly. "You know that, I suppose?"

Mr. Towlinson, as spokesman, admits a general knowledge of the fact.

"And you're all on the look-out for yourselves, I warrant you," says Mrs. Pipchin, shaking her head at them.

A shrill voice from the rear exclaims "No more than yourself!"

"That's your opinion, Mrs. Impudence, is it?" says the ireful Pipchin, looking with a fiery eye over the intermediate heads.

"Yes, Mrs. Pipchin, it is," replies Cook, advancing. "And what then, pray?"

"Why, then you may go as soon as you like," says Mrs. Pipchin. "The sooner, the better; and I hope I shall never see your face again."

With this the doughty Pipchin produces a canvass bag; and tells her wages out to that day, and a month beyond it; and clutches the money tight, until a receipt for the same is duly signed, to the last up-stroke; when she grudgingly lets it go. This form of proceeding Mrs. Pipchin repeats with every member of the household, until all are paid.

"Now those that choose, can go about their business," says Mrs. Pipchin, "and those that choose can stay here on board wages for a week or so, and make themselves useful. Except," says the inflammable Pipchin, "that slut of a cook, who'll go immediately."

"That," says Cook, "she certainly will! I wish you good-day, Mrs. Pipchin, and sincerely wish I could compliment you on the sweetness of your appearance!"

"Get along with you," says Mrs. Pipchin, stamping her foot.

Cook sails off with an air of beneficent dignity, highly exasperating to Mrs. Pipchin, and is shortly joined below stairs by the rest of the confederation.

Mr. Towlinson then says, that, in the first place, he would beg to propose a little snack of something to eat; and over that snack would desire to offer a suggestion which he thinks will meet the position in which they find themselves. The refreshment being produced, and very heartily partaken of, Mr. Towlinson's suggestion is, in effect, that Cook is going, and that if we are not true to ourselves, nobody will be true to us. That they have lived in that house a long time, and exerted themselves very much to be sociable together. (At this, Cook says, with emotion, "Hear, hear!" and Mrs. Perch, who is there again, and full to the throat, sheds tears.) And that he thinks, at the present time, the feeling ought to be 'Go one, go all!' The housemaid is much affected by this generous sentiment, and warmly



seconds it. Cook says she feels it's right, and only hopes it's not done as a compliment to her, but from a sense of duty. Mr. Towlinson replies, from a sense of duty; and that now he is driven to express his opinions, he will openly say, that he does not think it over-respectable to remain in a house where Sales and such-like are carrying forwards. The housemaid is sure of it; and relates, in confirmation, that a strange man, in a carpet cap, offered, this very morning, to kiss her on the stairs. Hereupon, Mr. Towlinson is starting from his chair, to seek and 'smash' the offender; when he is laid hold on by the ladies, who beseech him to calm himself, and to reflect that it is easier and wiser to leave the scene of such indecencies at once. Mrs. Perch, presenting the case in a new light, even shows that delicacy towards Mr. Dombey, shut up in his own rooms, imperatively demands precipitate retreat. "For what," says the good woman, "must his feelings be, if he was to come upon any of the poor servants that he once deceived into thinking him immensely rich!" Cook is so struck by this moral consideration, that Mrs. Perch improves it with several pious axioms, original and selected. It becomes a clear case that they must all go. Boxes are packed, cabs fetched, and at dusk that evening there is not one member of the party left.

The house stands, large and weatherproof, in the long dull street; but it is a ruin, and the rats fly from it.

The men in the carpet caps go on tumbling the furniture about; and the gentlemen with the pens and ink make out inventories of it, and sit upon pieces of furniture never made to be sat upon, and eat bread and cheese from the public-house on other pieces of furniture never made to be eaten on, and seem to have a delight in appropriating precious articles to strange uses. Chaotic combinations of furniture also take place. Mattresses and bedding appear in the dining-room; the glass and china get into the conservatory; the great dinner service is set out in heaps on the long divan in the large drawing-room; and the stair-wires, made into fasces, decorate the marble chimney-pieces. Finally, a rug, with a printed bill upon it, is hung out from the balcony; and a similar appendage graces either side of the hall door.

Then, all day long, there is a retinue of mouldy gigs and chaise-carts in the street; and herds of shabby vampires, Jew and Christian, over-run the house, sounding the plate-glass mirrors with their knuckles, striking discordant octaves on the Grand Piano, drawing wet forefingers over the pictures, breathing on the blades of the best dinner-knives, punching the squabs of chairs and sofas with their dirty fists, touzling the feather-beds, opening and shutting all the drawers, balancing the silver spoons and forks, looking into the very threads of the drapery and linen, and disparaging everything. There is not a secret place in the whole house. Fluffy and snuffy strangers stare into the kitchen-range as curiously as into the attic clothes-press. Stout men with napless hats on, look out of the bed-room windows, and cut jokes with friends in the street. Quiet, calculating spirits, withdraw into the dressing-rooms with catalogues, and make marginal notes thereon, with stumps of pencils. Two brokers invade the very fire-escape, and take a panoramic survey of the neighbourhood from the top of the house. The swarm and buzz, and going up and down, endure for days. The Capital Modern Household Furniture, &c., is on view.



Then there is a palisade of tables made in the best drawing-room; and on the capital, french-polished, extending, telescopic range of spanish mahogany dining tables with turned legs, the pulpit of the Auctioneer is erected; and the herds of shabby vampires, Jew and Christian, the strangers fluff and snuffy, and the stout men with the napless hats, congregate about it and sit upon everything within reach, mantel-pieces included, and begin to bid. Hot, humming, and dusty, are the rooms all day; and—high above the heat, hum, and dust—the head and shoulders, voice and hammer, of the Auctioneer, are ever at work. The men in the carpet caps get flustered and vicious with tumbling the Lots about, and still the Lots are going, going, gone; still coming on. Sometimes there is joking and a general roar. This lasts all day and three days following. The Capital Modern Household Furniture, &c., is on sale.

Then the mouldy gigs and chaise-carts reappear; and with them come spring-vans and waggons, and an army of porters with knots. All day long, the men with carpet-caps are screwing at screw-drivers and bed-winchies, or staggering by the dozen together on the staircase under heavy burdens, or upheaving perfect rocks of spanish mahogany, best rosewood, or plate-glass, into the gigs and chaise-carts, vans and waggons. All sorts of vehicles of burden are in attendance, from a tilted waggon to a wheelbarrow. Poor Paul's little bedstead is carried off in a donkey-tandem. For nearly a whole week, the Capital Modern Household Furniture, &c., is in course of removal.

At last it is all gone. Nothing is left about the house but scattered leaves of catalogues, littered scraps of straw and hay, and a battery of pewter pots behind the hall-door. The men with the carpet-caps gather up their screw-drivers and bed-winchies into bags, shoulder them, and walk off. One of the pen and ink gentlemen goes over the house as a last attention; sticking up bills in the windows respecting the lease of this desirable family mansion, and shutting the shutters. At length he follows the men with the carpet-caps. None of the invaders remain. The house is a ruin, and the rats fly from it.

Mrs. Pipchin's apartments, together with those locked rooms on the ground-floor where the window-blinds are drawn down close, have been spared the general devastation. Mrs. Pipchin has remained austere and stoney during the proceedings, in her own room; or has occasionally looked in at the sale to see what the goods are fetching, and to bid for one particular easy chair. Mrs. Pipchin has been the highest bidder for the easy chair and sits upon her property when Mrs. Chick comes to see her.

"How is my brother, Mrs. Pipchin?" says Mrs. Chick.

"I don't know any more than the deuce," says Mrs. Pipchin. "He never does me the honour to speak to me. He has his meat and drink put in the next room to his own; and what he takes, he comes out and takes when there's nobody there. It's no use asking me. I know no more about him than the man in the south who burnt his mouth by eating cold plum porridge.

This the acrimonious Pipchin says with a flounce.

"But good gracious me!" cries Mrs. Chick blandly, "How long is this to last! If my brother will not make an effort, Mrs. Pipchin, what is to become of him? I am sure I should have thought he had seen



enough of the consequences of *not* making an effort, by this time, to be warned against that fatal error."

"Hoity toity!" says Mrs. Pipchin, rubbing her nose. "There's a great fuss, I think, about it. It an't so wonderful a case. People have had misfortunes before now, and been obliged to part with their furniture. I'm sure *I* have!"

"My brother," pursues Mrs. Chick profoundly, "is so peculiar—so strange a man. He is the most peculiar man *I* ever saw. Would any one believe that when he received news of the marriage and emigration of that unnatural child—it's a comfort to me, now, to remember that I always said there was something extraordinary about that child: but nobody minds me—would anybody believe, I say, that he should then turn round upon me and say he had supposed, from my manner, that she had come to my house? Why, my gracious! And would anybody believe that when I merely say to him 'Paul, I may be very foolish, and I have no doubt I am, but I cannot understand how your affairs can have got into this state,' he should actually fly at me, and request that I will come to see him no more until he asks me! Why, my goodness!"

"Ah!" says Mrs. Pipchin. "It's a pity he hadn't a little more to do with mines. They'd have tried his temper for him."

"And what," resumes Mrs. Chick, quite regardless of Mrs. Pipchin's observations, "is it to end in? That's what I want to know. What does my brother mean to do? He must do something. It's of no use remaining shut up in his own rooms. Business won't come to him. No. He must go to it. Then why don't he go? He knows where to go, I suppose, having been a man of business all his life. Very good. Then why not go there?"

Mrs. Chick, after forging this powerful chain of reasoning, remains silent for a minute to admire it.

"Besides," says the discreet lady, with an argumentative air, "who ever heard of such obstinacy as his staying shut up here through all these dreadful disagreeables? It's not as if there was no place for him to go to. Of course he could have come to our house. He knows he is at home there, I suppose? Mr. Chick has perfectly bored about it, and I said with my own lips, 'Why surely, Paul, you don't imagine that because your affairs have got into this state, you are the less at home to such near relatives as ourselves? You don't imagine that we are like the rest of the world?' But no; here he stays all through, and here he is. Why, good gracious me, suppose the house was to be let! what would he do then? He couldn't remain here, then. If he attempted to do so, there would be an ejectment, an action for Doe, and all sorts of things; and then he *must* go. Then why not go at first instead of at last? And that brings me back to what I said just now, and I naturally ask what is to be the end of it?"

"I know what's to be the end of it, as far as *I* am concerned," replies Mrs. Pipchin, "and that's enough for me. I'm going to take *myself* off in a jiffy."

"In a which, Mrs. Pipchin," says Mrs. Chick.

"In a jiffy," retorts Mrs. Pipchin sharply.

"Ah, well! really I can't blame you, Mrs. Pipchin," says Mrs. Chick with frankness.



"It would be pretty much the same to me, if you could," replies the sardonic Pipchin. "At any rate I'm going. I can't stop here. I should be dead in a week. I had to cook my own pork chop yesterday, and I'm not used to it. My constitution will be giving way next. Besides I had a very fair connexion at Brighton when I came here—little Pankey's folks alone were worth a good eighty pounds a-year to me—and I can't afford to throw it away. I've written to my niece, and she expects me by this time."

"Have you spoken to my brother?" inquires Mrs. Chick.

"Oh, yes, it's very easy to say speak to him," retorts Mrs. Pipchin. "How is it done! I called out to him, yesterday, that I was no use here, and that he had better let me send for Mrs. Richards. He grunted something or other that meant yes, and I sent. Grunt indeed! If he had been Mr. Pipchin, he'd have had some reason to grunt. Yah! I've no patience with it!"

Here this exemplary female, who has pumped up so much fortitude and virtue from the depths of the Peruvian mines, rises from her cushioned property to see Mrs. Chick to the door. Mrs. Chick, deploring to the last the peculiar character of her brother, noiselessly retires, much occupied with her own sagacity and clearness of head.

In the dusk of the evening Mr. Toodle, being off duty, arrives with Polly and a box, and leaves them, with a sounding kiss, in the hall of the empty house, the retired character of which affects Mr. Toodle's spirits strongly.

"I tell you what, Polly my dear," says Mr. Toodle, "Being now, an ingen-driver and well to do in the world, I shouldn't allow of your coming here, to be made dull-like, if it warn't for favours past. But favours past, Polly, is never to be forgot. To them which is in adversity, besides, your face is a cord'l. So let's have another kiss on it, my dear. You wish no better than to do a right act, I know; and my views is, that it's right and dutiful to do this. Good night, Polly!"

Mrs. Pipchin by this time looms dark in her black bombazeen skirts, black bonnet, and shawl; and has her personal property packed up; and has her chair (late a favourite chair of Mr. Dombey's, and the dead bargain of the sale) ready near the street door; and is only waiting for a fly van, going to-night to Brighton on private service, which is to call for her, by private contract, and convey her home.

Presently it comes. Mrs. Pipchin's wardrobe being handed in and stowed away, Mrs. Pipchin's chair is next handed in, and placed in a convenient corner among certain trusses of hay; it being the intention of the amiable woman to occupy the chair during her journey. Mrs. Pipchin herself is next handed in, and grimly takes her seat. There is a snaky gleam in her hard grey eye, as of anticipated rounds of buttered toast, relays of hot chops, worryings and quellings of young children, sharp snappings at poor Berry, and all the other delights of her Ogress's castle. Mrs. Pipchin almost laughs as the Fly Van drives off, and she composes her black bombazeen skirts, and settles herself among the cushions of her easy chair.

The house is such a ruin that the rats have fled, and there is not one left.

But Polly, though alone in the deserted mansion—for there is no companionship in the shut-up rooms in which its late master hides his head—is not alone long. It is night; and she is sitting at work in the house-



keeper's room, trying to forget what a lonely house it is, and what a history belongs to it; when there is a knock at the hall door, as loud sounding as any knock can be, striking into such an empty place. Opening it, she returns across the echoing hall, accompanied by a female figure in a close black bonnet. It is Miss Tox, and Miss Tox's eyes are red.

"Oh, Polly," says Miss Tox, "when I looked in to have a little lesson with the children just now, I got the message that you left for me; and as soon as I could recover my spirits at all, I came on after you. Is there no one here but you?"

"Ah! not a soul," says Polly.

"Have you seen him?" whispers Miss Tox.

"Bless you," returns Polly, "no; he has not been seen this many a day. They tell me he never leaves his room."

"Is he said to be ill?" inquires Miss Tox.

"No ma'am, not that I know of," returns Polly, "except in his mind. He must be very bad there, poor gentleman!"

Miss Tox's sympathy is such that she can scarcely speak. She is no chicken, but she has not grown tough with age and celibacy. Her heart is very tender, her compassion very genuine, her homage very real. Beneath the locket with the fishy-eye in it, Miss Tox bears better qualities than many a less whimsical outside; such qualities as will outlive, by many courses of the sun, the best outsides and brightest husks that fall in the harvest of the great reaper.

It is long before Miss Tox goes away, and before Polly, with a candle flaring on the blank stairs, looks after her, for company, down the street, and feels unwilling to go back into the dreary house, and jar its emptiness with the heavy fastenings of the door, and glide away to bed. But all this Polly does; and in the morning sets in one of those darkened rooms such matters as she has been advised to prepare, and then retires and enters them no more until next morning at the same hour. There are bells there, but they never ring; and though she can sometimes hear a foot-fall going to and fro, it never comes out.

Miss Tox returns early in the day. It then begins to be Miss Tox's occupation to prepare little dainties—or what are such to her—to be carried into these rooms next morning. She derives so much satisfaction from the pursuit, that she enters on it regularly from that time; and brings daily in her little basket, various choice condiments selected from the scanty stores of the deceased owner of the powdered head and pigtail. She likewise brings, in sheets of curl paper, morsels of cold meats, tongues of sheep, halves of fowls, for her own dinner; and sharing these collations with Polly, passes the greater part of her time in the ruined house that the rats have fled from: hiding, in a fright at every sound, stealing in and out like a criminal; only desiring to be true to the fallen object of her admiration, unknown to him, unknown to all the world but one poor simple woman.

The Major knows it; but no one is the wiser for that, though the Major is much the merrier. The Major, in a fit of curiosity, has charged the Native to watch the house sometimes, and find out what becomes of Dombey. The Native has reported Miss Tox's fidelity, and the Major has nearly choked himself dead with laughter. He is permanently bluer



from that hour, and constantly wheezes to himself, his lobster eyes starting out of his head, "Damme, Sir, the woman's a born idiot!"

And the ruined man. How does he pass the hours, alone?

"Let him remember it in that room, years to come!" He did remember it. It was heavy on his mind now; heavier than all the rest.

"Let him remember it in that room, years to come. The rain that falls upon the roof, the wind that mourns outside the door, may have foreknowledge in their melancholy sound. Let him remember it in that room, years to come!"

He did remember it. In the miserable night he thought of it; in the dreary day, the wretched dawn, the ghostly, memory-haunted twilight. He did remember it. In agony, in sorrow, in remorse, in despair! "Papa! papa! Speak to me, dear papa!" He heard the words again, and saw the face. He saw it fall upon the trembling hands, and heard the one prolonged low cry go upward.

He was fallen, never to be raised up any more. For the night of his worldly ruin there was no to-morrow's sun; for the stain of his domestic shame there was no purification; nothing, thank Heaven, could bring his dead child back to life. But that which he might have made so different in all the Past—which might have made the Past itself so different, though this he hardly thought of now—that which was his own work, that which he could so easily have wrought into a blessing, and had set himself so steadily for years to form into a curse: that was the sharp grief of his soul.

Oh! He did remember it! The rain that fell upon the roof, the wind that mourned outside the door that night, had had foreknowledge in their melancholy sound. He knew, now, what he had done. He knew now, that he had called down that upon his head, which bowed it lower than the heaviest stroke of fortune. He knew, now, what it was to be rejected and deserted; now, when every loving blossom he had withered in his innocent daughter's heart was snowing down in ashes on him.

He thought of her, as she had been that night when he and his bride came home. He thought of her as she had been, in all the home-events of the abandoned House. He thought, now, that of all around him, she alone had never changed. His boy had faded into dust, his proud wife had sunk into a polluted creature, his flatterer and friend had been transformed into the worst of villains, his riches had melted away, the very walls that sheltered him looked on him as a stranger; she alone had turned the same mild gentle look upon him always. Yes, to the latest and the last. She had never changed to him—nor had he ever changed to her—and she was lost.

As, one by one, they fell away before his mind—his baby-hope, his wife, his friend, his fortune—oh how the mist, through which he had seen her, cleared, and showed him her true self! Oh, how much better than this that he had loved her as he had his boy, and lost her as he had his boy, and laid them in their early grave together!

In his pride—for he was proud yet—he let the world go from him freely. As it fell away, he shook it off. Whether he imagined its face as expressing pity for him, or indifference to him, he shunned it alike. It was in the same degree to be avoided, in either aspect. He had no idea of any one companion in his misery, but the one he had



driven away. What he would have said to her, or what consolation submitted to receive from her, he never pictured to himself. But he always knew she would have been true to him, if he had suffered her. He always knew she would have loved him better now, than at any other time; he was as certain that it was in her nature, as he was that there was a sky above him; and he sat thinking so, in his loneliness, from hour to hour. Day after day uttered this speech; night after night showed him this knowledge.

It began, beyond all doubt (however slowly it advanced for some time), in the receipt of her young husband's letter, and the certainty that she was gone. And yet—so proud he was in his ruin, or so reminiscent of her only as something that might have been his, but was lost beyond redemption—that if he could have heard her voice in an adjoining room, he would not have gone to her. If he could have seen her in the street, and she had done no more than look at him as she had been used to look, he would have passed on with his old cold unforgiving face, and not addressed her, or relaxed it, though his heart should have broken soon afterwards. However turbulent his thoughts, or harsh his anger had been, at first, concerning her marriage, or her husband, that was all past now. He chiefly thought of what might have been, and what was not. What was, was all summed up in this: that she was lost, and he bowed down with sorrow and remorse.

And now he felt that he had had two children born to him in that house, and that between him and the bare wide empty walls there was a tie, mournful, but hard to rend asunder, connected with a double childhood, and a double loss. He had thought to leave the house—knowing he must go, not knowing whither—upon the evening of the day on which this feeling first struck root in his breast; but he resolved to stay another night, and in the night to ramble through the rooms once more.

He came out of his solitude when it was the dead of night, and with a candle in his hand went softly up the stairs. Of all the footmarks there, making them as common as the common street, there was not one, he thought, but had seemed at the time to set itself upon his brain while he had kept close, listening. He looked at their number, and their hurry, and contention—foot treading foot out, and upward track and downward jostling one another—and thought, with absolute dread and wonder, how much he must have suffered during that trial, and what a changed man he had cause to be. He thought, besides, oh was there, somewhere in the world, a light footstep that might have worn out in a moment half those marks!—and bent his head, and wept, as he went up.

He almost saw it, going on before. He stopped, looking up towards the skylight; and a figure, childish itself, but carrying a child, and singing as it went, seemed to be there again. Anon, it was the same figure, alone, stopping for an instant, with suspended breath; the bright hair clustering loosely round its tearful face; and looking back at him.

He wandered through the rooms: lately so luxurious; now so bare and dismal and so changed, apparently, even in their shape and size. The press of footsteps was as thick here; and the same consideration of the suffering he had had, perplexed and terrified him. He began to fear that all this intricacy in his brain would drive him mad; and that his thoughts



already lost coherence as the footprints did, and were pieced on to one another, with the same trackless involutions, and varieties of indistinct shapes.

He did not so much as know in which of these rooms she had lived, when she was alone. He was glad to leave them, and go wandering higher up. Abundance of associations were here, connected with his false wife, his false friend and servant, his false grounds of pride; but he put them all by now, and only recalled miserably, weakly, fondly, his two children.

Everywhere, the footsteps! They had had no respect for the old room high up, where the little bed had been; he could hardly find a clear space there, to throw himself down, on the floor, against the wall, poor broken man, and let his tears flow as they would. He had shed so many tears here, long ago, that he was less ashamed of his weakness in this place than in any other—perhaps, with that consciousness, had made excuses to himself for coming here. Here, with stooping shoulders and his chin dropped on his breast, he had come. Here, thrown upon the bare boards, in the dead of night, he wept, alone—a proud man, even then; who, if a kind hand could have been stretched out, or a kind face could have looked in, would have risen up, and turned away, and gone down to his cell.

When the day broke he was shut up in his rooms again. He had meant to go away to-day, but clung to this tie in the house as the last and only thing left to him. He would go to-morrow. To-morrow came. He would go to-morrow. Every night, within the knowledge of no human creature, he came forth, and wandered through the despoiled house like a ghost. Many a morning when the day broke, his altered face, drooping behind the closed blind in his window, imperfectly transparent to the light as yet, pondered on the loss of his two children. It was one child no more. He re-united them in his thoughts, and they were never asunder. Oh, that he could have united them in his past love, and in death, and that one had not been so much worse than dead!

Strong mental agitation and disturbance was no novelty to him, even before his late sufferings. It never is, to obstinate and sullen natures; for they struggle hard to be such. Ground long undermined, will often fall down in a moment; what was undermined here in so many ways, weakened, and crumbled, little by little, more and more, as the hand moved on the dial.

At last he began to think he need not go at all. He might yet give up what his creditors had spared him (that they had not spared him more, was his own act), and only sever the tie between him and the ruined house, by severing that other link——

It was then that his footfall was audible in the late housekeeper's room, as he walked to and fro; but not audible in its true meaning, or it would have had an appalling sound.

The world was very busy and restless about him. He became aware of that again. It was whispering and babbling. It was never quiet. This, and the intricacy and complication of the footsteps, harassed him to death. Objects began to take a bleared and russet colour in his eyes. Dombey and Son was no more—his children no more. This must be thought of, well, to-morrow.

He thought of it to-morrow; and sitting thinking in his chair, saw, in the glass, from time to time, this picture:



A spectral, haggard, wasted likeness of himself, brooded and brooded over the empty fireplace. Now it lifted up its head, examining the lines and hollows in its face; now hung it down again, and brooded afresh. Now it rose and walked about; now passed into the next room, and came back with something from the dressing-table in its breast. Now, it was looking at the bottom of the door, and thinking.

— Hush! what?

It was thinking that if blood were to trickle that way, and to leak out into the hall, it must be a long time going so far. It would move so stealthily and slowly, creeping on, with here a lazy little pool, and there a start, and then another little pool, that a desperately wounded man could only be discovered through its means, either dead or dying. When it had thought of this a long while, it got up again, and walked to and fro with its hand in its breast. He glanced at it occasionally, very curious to watch its motions, and he marked how wicked and murderous that hand looked.

Now it was thinking again! What was it thinking?

Whether they would tread in the blood when it crept so far, and carry it about the house among those many prints of feet, or even out into the street.

It sat down, with its eyes upon the empty fireplace, and as it lost itself in thought there shone into the room a gleam of light; a ray of sun. It was quite unmindful, and sat thinking. Suddenly it rose, with a terrible face, and that guilty hand grasping what was in its breast. Then it was arrested by a cry—a wild, loud, piercing, loving, rapturous cry—and he only saw his own reflection in the glass, and at his knees, his daughter!

Yes. His daughter! Look at her! Look here! Down upon the ground, clinging to him, calling to him, folding her hands, praying to him.

“Papa! Dearest papa! Pardon me, forgive me! I have come back to ask forgiveness on my knees. I never can be happy more, without it!”

Unchanged still. Of all the world, unchanged. Raising the same face to his, as on that miserable night. Asking *his* forgiveness!

“Dear papa, oh don’t look strangely on me! I never meant to leave you, I never thought of it, before or afterwards. I was frightened when I went away, and could not think. Papa, dear, I am changed. I am penitent. I know my fault. I know my duty better now. Papa, don’t cast me off, or I shall die!”

He tottered to his chair. He felt her draw his arms about her neck; he felt her put her own round his; he felt her kisses on his face; he felt her wet cheek laid against his own; he felt—oh, how deeply!—all that he had done.

Upon the breast that he had bruised, against the heart that he had almost broken, she laid his face, now covered with his hands, and said, sobbing:

“Papa, love, I am a mother. I have a child who will soon call Walter by the name by which I call you. When it was born, and when I knew how much I loved it, I knew what I had done in leaving you. Forgive me, dear Papa! oh say God bless me, and my little child!”

He would have said it, if he could. He would have raised his hands and besought her for pardon, but she caught them in her own, and put them down, hurriedly.



"My little child was born at sea, Papa. I prayed to God (and so did Walter for me) to spare me, that I might come home. The moment I could land, I came back to you. Never let us be parted any more, Papa. Never let us be parted any more!"

His head, now grey, was encircled by her arm; and he groaned to think that never, never, had it rested so before.

"You will come home with me, Papa, and see my baby. A boy, Papa. His name is Paul. I think—I hope—he's like—"

Her tears stopped her.

"Dear Papa, for the sake of my child, for the sake of the name we have given him, for my sake, pardon Walter. He is so kind and tender to me. I am so happy with him. It was not his fault that we were married. It was mine. I loved him so much."

She clung closer to him, more endearing and more earnest.

"He is the darling of my heart, Papa. I would die for him. He will love and honour you as I will. We will teach our little child to love and honour you; and we will tell him, when he can understand, that you had a son of that name once, and that he died, and you were very sorry; but that he is gone to Heaven, where we all hope to see him when our time for resting comes. Kiss me, Papa, as a promise that you will be reconciled to Walter—to my dearest husband—to the father of the little child who taught me to come back, Papa. Who taught me to come back!"

As she clung closer to him, in another burst of tears, he kissed her on her lips, and, lifting up his eyes, said, "Oh my God, forgive me, for I need it very much!"

With that he dropped his head again, lamenting over and caressing her, and there was not a sound in all the house for a long, long time; they remaining clasped in one another's arms, in the glorious sunshine that had crept in with Florence.

He dressed himself for going out, with a docile submission to her entreaty; and walking with a feeble gait, and looking back, with a tremble, at the room in which he had been so long shut up, and where he had seen the picture in the glass, passed out with her into the hall. Florence, hardly glancing round her, lest she should remind him freshly of their last parting—for their feet were on the very stones where he had struck her in his madness—and keeping close to him, with her eyes upon his face, and his arm about her, led him out to a coach that was waiting at the door, and carried him away.

Then, Miss Tox and Polly came out of their concealment, and exulted tearfully. And then they packed his clothes, and books, and so forth, with great care; and consigned them in due course to certain persons sent by Florence, in the evening, to fetch them. And then they took a last cup of tea in the lonely house.

"And so Dombey and Son, as I observed upon a certain sad occasion," said Miss Tox, winding up a host of recollections, "is indeed a daughter, Polly, after all."

"And a good one!" exclaimed Polly.

"You are right," said Miss Tox; "and it's a credit to you, Polly, that you were always her friend when she was a little child. You were her friend long before I was, Polly," said Miss Tox; "and you're a good creature. Robin!"



Miss Tox addressed herself to a bullet-headed young man, who appeared to be in but indifferent circumstances, and in depressed spirits, and who was sitting in a remote corner. Rising, he disclosed to view the form and features of the Grinder.

"Robin," said Miss Tox, "I have just observed to your mother, as you may have heard, that she is a good creature."

"And so she is, Miss," quoth the Grinder, with some feeling.

"Very well, Robin," said Miss Tox, "I am glad to hear you say so. Now, Robin, as I am going to give you a trial, at your urgent request, as my domestic, with a view to your restoration to respectability, I will take this impressive occasion of remarking that I hope you will never forget that you have, and have always had, a good mother, and that you will endeavour so to conduct yourself as to be a comfort to her."

"Upon my soul I will, Miss," returned the Grinder. "I have come through a good deal, and my intentions is now as straight for'ard, Miss, as a cove's—"

"I must get you to break yourself of that word, Robin, if you please," interposed Miss Tox, politely.

"If you please, Miss, as a chap's—"

"Thankee, Robin, no," returned Miss Tox. "I should prefer individual."

"As a indiiddle's," said the Grinder.

"Much better," remarked Miss Tox, complacently; "infinitely more expressive!"

"—can be," pursued Rob. "If I hadn't been and got made a Grinder on, Miss and mother, which was a most unfortunate circumstance for a young co—indiiddle."

"Very good indeed," observed Miss Tox, approvingly.

"—and if I hadn't been led away by birds, and then fallen into a bad service," said the Grinder, "I hope I might have done better. But it's never too late for a—"

"Indi—" suggested Miss Tox.

"widdle," said the Grinder, "to mend; and I hope to mend, Miss, with your kind trial; and wishing, mother, my love to father, and brothers and sisters, and saying of it."

"I am very glad indeed to hear it," observed Miss Tox. "Will you take a little bread and butter, and a cup of tea, before we go, Robin?"

"Thankee, Miss," returned the Grinder; who immediately began to use his own personal grinders in a most remarkable manner, as if he had been on very short allowance for a considerable period.

Miss Tox being, in good time, bonneted and shawled, and Polly too, Rob hugged his mother, and followed his new mistress away; so much to the hopeful admiration of Polly, that something in her eyes made luminous rings round the gas-lamps as she looked after him. Polly then put out her light, locked the house-door, delivered the key at an agent's hard by, and went home as fast as she could go; rejoicing in the shrill delight that her unexpected arrival would occasion there. The great house, dumb as to all that had been suffered in it, and the changes it had witnessed, stood frowning like a dark mute on the street; baulking any nearer inquiries with the staring announcement that the lease of this desirable Family Mansion was to be disposed of.



## CHAPTER LX.

## CHIEFLY MATRIMONIAL.

THE grand half-yearly festival holden by Doctor and Mrs. Blimber, on which occasion they requested the pleasure of the company of every young gentleman pursuing his studies in that genteel establishment, at an early party, when the hour was half-past seven o'clock, and when the object was quadrilles, had duly taken place, about this time; and the young gentlemen, with no unbecoming demonstrations of levity, had betaken themselves, in a state of scholastic repletion, to their own homes. Mr. Skettles had repaired abroad, permanently to grace the establishment of his father Sir Barnet Skettles, whose popular manners had obtained him a diplomatic appointment, the honours of which were discharged by himself and Lady Skettles, to the satisfaction even of their own countrymen and countrywomen: which was considered almost miraculous. Mr. Tozer, now a young man of lofty stature, in Wellington boots, was so extremely full of antiquity, as to be nearly on a par with a genuine ancient Roman in his knowledge of English: a triumph that affected his good parents with the tenderest emotions, and caused the father and mother of Mr. Briggs (whose learning, like ill-arranged luggage, was so tightly packed that he couldn't get at anything he wanted) to hide their diminished heads. The fruit laboriously gathered from the tree of knowledge by this latter young gentleman, in fact, had been subjected to so much pressure, that it had become a kind of intellectual Norfolk Biffin, and had nothing of its original form or flavour remaining. Master Bitherstone, now, on whom the forcing system had the happier and not uncommon effect of leaving no impression whatever, when the forcing apparatus ceased to work, was in a much more comfortable plight; and being then on ship-board, bound for Bengal, found himself forgetting, with such admirable rapidity, that it was doubtful whether his declensions of noun-substantives would hold out to the end of the voyage.

When Doctor Blimber, in pursuance of the usual course, would have said to the young gentlemen, on the morning of the party, "Gentlemen, we will resume our studies on the twenty-fifth of next month," he departed from the usual course, and said, "Gentlemen, when our friend Cincinnatus retired to his farm, he did not present to the senate any Roman whom he sought to nominate as his successor. But there is a Roman here," said Doctor Blimber, laying his hand on the shoulder of Mr. Feeder, B.A., "*adolescens imprimis gravis et doctus*, gentlemen, whom I, a retiring Cincinnatus, wish to present to *my* little senate, as their future Dictator. Gentlemen, we will resume our studies on the twenty-fifth of next month, under the auspices of Mr. Feeder, B.A." At this (which Doctor Blimber had previously called upon all the parents, and urbanely explained), the young gentlemen cheered; and Mr. Tozer, on behalf of the rest, instantly presented the Doctor with a silver inkstand, in a speech containing very little of the mother-tongue, but fifteen quotations from the Latin, and seven from the Greek, which moved the younger of the young gentlemen to discontent and envy: they remarking, "Oh, ah! It was all very well for old Tozer, but they didn't subscribe money



for old Tozer to show off with, they supposed; did they? What business was it of old Tozer's more than anybody else's? It wasn't *his* inkstand. Why couldn't he leave the boys' property alone?" and murmuring other expressions of their dissatisfaction, which seemed to find a greater relief in calling him old Tozer, than in any other available vent.

Not a word had been said to the young gentlemen, nor a hint dropped, of anything like a contemplated marriage between Mr. Feeder, B.A., and the fair Cornelia Blimber. Doctor Blimber, especially, seemed to take pains to look as if nothing would surprise him more; but it was perfectly well known to all the young gentlemen nevertheless, and when they departed for the society of their relations and friends, they took leave of Mr. Feeder with awe.

Mr. Feeder's most romantic visions were fulfilled. The Doctor had determined to paint the house outside, and put it in thorough repair; and to give up the business, and to give up Cornelia. The painting and repairing began upon the very day of the young gentlemen's departure, and now behold! the wedding morning was come, and Cornelia, in a new pair of spectacles, was waiting to be led to the hymeneal altar.

The Doctor with his learned legs, and Mrs. Blimber in a lilac bonnet, and Mr. Feeder, B.A., with his long knuckles and his bristly head of hair, and Mr. Feeder's brother, the Reverend Alfred Feeder, M.A., who was to perform the ceremony, were all assembled in the drawing-room, and Cornelia with her orange-flowers and bridesmaids had just come down, and looked, as of old, a little squeezed in appearance but very charming, when the door opened, and the weak-eyed young man, in a loud voice, made the following proclamation:

"MR. AND MRS. TOOTS!"

Upon which there entered Mr. Toots, grown extremely stout, and on his arm a lady very handsomely and becomingly dressed, with very bright black eyes.

"Mrs. Blimber," said Mr. Toots, "allow me to present my wife."

Mrs. Blimber was delighted to receive her. Mrs. Blimber was a little condescending, but extremely kind.

"And as you've known me for a long time, you know," said Mr. Toots, "let me assure you that she is one of the most remarkable women that ever lived."

"My dear!" remonstrated Mrs. Toots.

"Upon my word and honour she is," said Mr. Toots. "I—I assure you, Mrs. Blimber, she's a most extraordinary woman."

Mrs. Toots laughed merrily, and Mrs. Blimber led her to Cornelia. Mr. Toots having paid his respects in that direction, and having saluted his old preceptor, who said, in allusion to his conjugal state, "Well Toots, well Toots! So you are one of us, are you Toots?"—retired with Mr. Feeder, B.A., into a window.

Mr. Feeder, B.A., being in great spirits, made a spar at Mr. Toots, and tapped him skillfully with the back of his hand on the breast-bone.

"Well, old Buck!" said Mr. Feeder with a laugh. "Well! Here we are! Taken in and done for. Eh?"

"Feeder," returned Mr. Toots. "I give you joy. If you're as—as—as perfectly blissful in a matrimonial life, as I am myself, you'll have nothing to desire."



"I don't forget *my* old friends, you see," said Mr. Feeder. "I ask 'em to *my* wedding, Toots."

"Feeder," replied Mr. Toots gravely, "the fact is, that there were several circumstances which prevented me from communicating with you until after my marriage had been solemnised. In the first place I had made a perfect Brute of myself to you, on the subject of Miss Dombey; and I felt that if you were asked to any wedding of mine, you would naturally expect that it was *with* Miss Dombey, which involved explanations, that upon my word and honour, at that crisis, would have knocked me completely over. In the second place, our wedding was strictly private; there being nobody present but one friend of myself and Mrs. Toots's, who is a Captain in—I don't exactly know in what," said Mr. Toots, "but it's of no consequence. I hope, Feeder, that in writing a statement of what had occurred before Mrs. Toots and myself went abroad upon our foreign tour, I fully discharged the offices of friendship."

"Toots, my boy," said Mr. Feeder, shaking hands, "I was joking."

"And now Feeder," said Mr. Toots, "I should be glad to know what you think of my union."

"Capital!" returned Mr. Feeder.

"You think it's capital, do you, Feeder?" said Mr. Toots solemnly. "Then how capital must it be to Me. For *you* can never know what an extraordinary woman that is."

Mr. Feeder was willing to take it for granted. But Mr. Toots shook his head, and wouldn't hear of that being possible.

"You see," said Mr. Toots, "what *I* wanted in a wife was—in short, was sense. Money, Feeder, I had. Sense I—I had not, particularly."

Mr. Feeder murmured, "Oh yes, you had, Toots!" But Mr. Toots said:

"No, Feeder, I had *not*. Why should I disguise it? I had *not*. I knew that sense was There," said Mr. Toots, stretching out his hand towards his wife, "in perfect heaps. I had no relation to object or be offended, on the score of station; for I had no relation. I have never had anybody belonging to me but my guardian, and him, Feeder, I have always considered as a Pirate and a Corsair. Therefore, you know it was not likely," said Mr. Toots, "that I should take *his* opinion."

"No," said Mr. Feeder.

"Accordingly," resumed Mr. Toots, "I acted on my own. Bright was the day on which I did so! Feeder! Nobody but myself can tell what the capacity of that woman's mind is. If ever the Rights of Women, and all that kind of thing, are properly attended to, it will be through her powerful intellect.—Susan, my dear!" said Mr. Toots, looking abruptly out of the window-curtains, "pray do not exert yourself!"

"My dear," said Mrs. Toots, "I was only talking."

"But my love," said Mr. Toots, "pray do not exert yourself. You really must be careful. Do not, my dear Susan, exert yourself. She's so easily excited," said Mr. Toots, apart to Mrs. Blimber, "and then she forgets the medical man altogether."

Mrs. Blimber was impressing on Mrs. Toots the necessity of caution, when Mr. Feeder, B.A., offered her his arm, and led her down to the carriages that were in waiting to go to church. Doctor Blimber escorted Mrs. Toots. Mr. Toots escorted the fair bride, around whose lambent spectacles two gauzy little bridesmaids fluttered like moths. Mr. Feeder's



brother, Mr. Alfred Feeder, M.A., had already gone on, in advance, to assume his official functions.

The ceremony was performed in an admirable manner. Cornelia, with her crisp little curls, "went in," as the Chicken might have said, with great composure; and Doctor Blimber gave her away, like a man who had quite made up his mind to it. The gauzy little bridesmaids appeared to suffer most. Mrs. Blimber was affected, but gently so; and told The Reverend Mr. Alfred Feeder, M.A., on the way home, that if she could only have seen Cicero in his retirement at Tusculum, she would not have had a wish, now, ungratified.

There was a breakfast afterwards, limited to the same small party; at which the spirits of Mr. Feeder, B.A., were tremendous, and so communicated themselves to Mrs. Toots, that Mr. Toots was several times heard to observe, across the table, "My dear Susan, *don't* exert yourself!" The best of it was, that Mr. Toots felt it incumbent on him to make a speech; and in spite of a whole code of telegraphic dissuasions from Mrs. Toots, appeared on his legs for the first time in his life.

"I really," said Mr. Toots, "in this house, where whatever was done to me in the way of—of any mental confusion sometimes—which is of no consequence and I impute to nobody—I was always treated like one of Doctor Blimber's family, and had a desk to myself for a considerable period—can—not—allow—my friend Feeder to be—"

Mrs. Toots suggested "married."

"It may not be inappropriate to the occasion, or altogether uninteresting," said Mr. Toots with a delighted face, "to observe that my wife is a most extraordinary woman, and would do this much better than myself—allow my friend Feeder to be married—especially to—"

Mrs. Toots suggested, "to Miss Blimber."

"To Mrs. Feeder, my love!" said Mr. Toots, in a subdued tone of private discussion: "'whom God hath joined,' you know, 'let no man'—don't you know? I cannot allow my friend, Feeder, to be married—especially to Mrs. Feeder—without proposing their—their—Toasts; and may," said Mr. Toots, fixing his eyes on his wife, as if for inspiration in a high flight, "may the torch of Hymen be the beacon of joy, and may the flowers we have this day strewed in their path, be the—the banishers of—of gloom!"

Doctor Blimber, who had a taste for metaphor, was pleased with this, and said, "Very good, Toots! Very well said, indeed, Toots!" and nodded his head and patted his hands. Mr. Feeder made in reply, a comic speech chequered with sentiment. Mr. Alfred Feeder, M.A., was afterwards very happy on Doctor and Mrs. Blimber; Mr. Feeder, B.A., scarcely less so, on the gauzy little bridesmaids. Doctor Blimber then, in a sonorous voice, delivered a few thoughts in the pastoral style, relative to the rushes among which it was the intention of himself and Mrs. Blimber to dwell, and the bee that would hum around their cot. Shortly after which, as the Doctor's eyes were twinkling in a remarkable manner, and his son-in-law had already observed that time was made for slaves, and had inquired whether Mrs. Toots sang, the discreet Mrs. Blimber dissolved the sitting, and sent Cornelia away, very cool and comfortable, in a post-chaise, with the man of her heart.



Mr. and Mrs. Toots withdrew to the Bedford (Mrs. Toots had been there before in old times, under her maiden name of Nipper), and there found a letter, which it took Mr. Toots such an enormous time to read, that Mrs. Toots was frightened.

"My dear Susan," said Mr. Toots, "fright is worse than exertion. Pray be calm!"

"Who is it from?" asked Mrs. Toots.

"Why, my love," said Mr. Toots, "it's from Captain Gills. Do not excite yourself. Walters and Miss Dombey are expected home!"

"My dear," said Mrs. Toots, raising herself quickly from the sofa, very pale, "don't try to deceive me, for it's no use, they're come home—I see it plainly in your face!"

"She's a most extraordinary woman!" exclaimed Mr. Toots, in rapturous admiration. "You're perfectly right, my love, they have come home. Miss Dombey has seen her father, and they are reconciled!"

"Reconciled!" cried Mrs. Toots, clapping her hands.

"My dear," said Mr. Toots; "pray do not exert yourself. Do remember the medical man! Captain Gills says—at least, he don't say, but I imagine, from what I can make out, he means—that Miss Dombey has brought her unfortunate father away from his old house, to one where she and Walters are living; that he is lying very ill there—supposed to be dying; and that she attends upon him night and day."

Mrs. Toots began to cry quite bitterly.

"My dearest Susan," replied Mr. Toots, "do, do, if you possibly can, remember the medical man! If you can't, it's of no consequence—but do endeavour to!"

His wife, with her old manner suddenly restored, so pathetically entreated him to take her to her precious pet, her little mistress, her own darling, and the like, that Mr. Toots, whose sympathy and admiration were of the strongest kind, consented from his very heart of hearts; and they agreed to depart immediately, and present themselves in answer to the Captain's letter.

Now some hidden sympathies of things, or some coincidences, had that day brought the Captain himself (toward whom Mr. and Mrs. Toots were soon journeying), into the flowery train of wedlock; not as a principal, but as an accessory. It happened accidentally, and thus:

The Captain, having seen Florence and her baby for a moment, to his unbounded content, and having had a long talk with Walter, turned out for a walk; feeling it necessary to have some solitary meditation on the changes of human affairs, and to shake his glazed hat profoundly over the fall of Mr. Dombey, for whom the generosity and simplicity of his nature were awakened in a lively manner. The Captain would have been very low, indeed, on the unhappy gentleman's account, but for the recollection of the baby; which afforded him such intense satisfaction whenever it arose, that he laughed aloud as he went along the street, and indeed, more than once, in a sudden impulse of joy, threw up his glazed hat and caught it again; much to the amazement of the spectators. The rapid alternations of light and shade to which these two conflicting subjects of reflection exposed the Captain, were so very trying to his spirits, that he felt a long walk necessary to his composure; and as there is a



great deal in the influence of harmonious associations, he chose, for the scene of this walk, his old neighbourhood, down among the mast, oar, and block makers, ship-biscuit bakers, coal-whippers, pitch-kettles, sailors, canals, docks, swing-bridges, and other soothing objects.

These peaceful scenes, and particularly the region of Limehouse-Hole and thereabouts, were so influential in calming the Captain, that he walked on with restored tranquillity, and was, in fact, regaling himself, under his breath, with the ballad of *Lovely Peg*, when, on turning a corner, he was suddenly transfixed and rendered speechless by a triumphant procession that he beheld advancing towards him.

This awful demonstration was headed by that determined woman Mrs. Mac Stinger, who, preserving a countenance of inexorable resolution, and wearing conspicuously attached to her obdurate bosom a stupendous watch and appendages, which the Captain recognised at a glance as the property of Bunsby, conducted under her arm no other than that sagacious mariner; he, with the distraught and melancholy visage of a captive borne into a foreign land, meekly resigning himself to her will. Behind them appeared the young Mac Stingers, in a body, exulting. Behind them, two ladies of a terrible and steadfast aspect, leading between them a short gentleman in a tall hat, who likewise exulted. In the wake, appeared Bunsby's boy, bearing umbrellas. The whole were in good marching order; and a dreadful smartness that pervaded the party would have sufficiently announced, if the intrepid countenances of the ladies had been wanting, that it was a procession of sacrifice, and that the victim was Bunsby.

The first impulse of the Captain was to run away. This also appeared to be the first impulse of Bunsby, hopeless as its execution must have proved. But a cry of recognition proceeding from the party, and Alexander Mac Stinger running up to the Captain with open arms, the Captain struck.

"Well, Cap'en Cuttle!" said Mrs. Mac Stinger. "This is indeed a meeting! I bear no malice now, Cap'en Cuttle—you needn't fear that I'm a going to cast any reflexions. I hope to go to the altar in another spirit." Here Mrs. Mac Stinger paused, and drawing herself up, and inflating her bosom with a long breath, said, in allusion to the victim, "My usband, Cap'en Cuttle!"

The abject Bunsby looked neither to the right nor to the left, nor at his bride, nor at his friend, but straight before him at nothing. The Captain putting out his hand, Bunsby put out his; but, in answer to the Captain's greeting, spake no word.

"Cap'en Cuttle," said Mrs. Mac Stinger, "if you would wish to heal up past animosities, and to see the last of your friend, my usband, as a single person, we should be appy of your company to chapel. Here is a lady here," said Mrs. Mac Stinger, turning round to the more intrepid of the two, "my bridesmaid, that will be glad of your protection, Cap'en Cuttle."

The short gentleman in the tall hat, who it appeared was the husband of the other lady, and who evidently exulted at the reduction of a fellow-creature to his own condition, gave place at this, and resigned the lady to Captain Cuttle. The lady immediately seized him, and,



observing that there was no time to lose, gave the word, in a strong voice, to advance.

The Captain's concern for his friend, not unmingled, at first, with some concern for himself—for a shadowy terror that he might be married by violence, possessed him, until his knowledge of the service came to his relief, and remembering the legal obligation of saying "I will," he felt himself personally safe so long as he resolved, if asked any question, distinctly to reply "I won't"—threw him into a profuse perspiration; and rendered him, for a time, insensible to the movements of the procession, of which he now formed a feature, and to the conversation of his fair companion. But as he became less agitated, he learnt from this lady that she was the widow of a Mr. Bokum, who had held an employment in the Custom House; that she was the dearest friend of Mrs. Mac Stinger, whom she considered a pattern for her sex; that she had often heard of the Captain, and now hoped he had repented of his past life; that she trusted Mr. Bunsby knew what a blessing he had gained, but that she feared men seldom did know what such blessings were, until they had lost them; with more to the same purpose.

All this time, the Captain could not but observe that Mrs. Bokum kept her eyes steadily on the bridegroom, and that whenever they came near a court or other narrow turning which appeared favourable for flight, she was on the alert to cut him off if he attempted escape. The other lady too, as well as her husband, the short gentleman with the tall hat, were plainly on guard, according to a preconcerted plan; and the wretched man was so secured by Mrs. Mac Stinger, that any effort at self-preservation by flight was rendered futile. This, indeed, was apparent to the mere populace, who expressed their perception of the fact by jeers and cries; to all of which, the dread Mac Stinger was inflexibly indifferent, while Bunsby himself appeared in a state of unconsciousness.

The Captain made many attempts to accost the philosopher, if only in a monosyllable or a signal; but always failed, in consequence of the vigilance of the guard, and the difficulty, at all times peculiar to Bunsby's constitution, of having his attention aroused by any outward and visible sign whatever. Thus they approached the chapel, a neat whitewashed edifice, recently engaged by the Reverend Melchisedech Howler, who had consented, on very urgent solicitation, to give the world another two years of existence, but had informed his followers that, then, it must positively go.

While the Reverend Melchisedech was offering up some extemporary orisons, the Captain found an opportunity of growling in the bridegroom's ear:

"What cheer, my lad, what cheer?"

To which Bunsby replied, with a forgetfulness of the Reverend Melchisedech, which nothing but his desperate circumstances could have excused:

"D—d bad."

"Jack Bunsby," whispered the Captain, "do you do this here, o' your own free will?"

Mr. Bunsby answered "No."

"Why do you do it, then, my lad?" inquired the Captain, not unnaturally.



Bunsby, still looking, and always looking with an immovable countenance, at the opposite side of the world, made no reply.

"Why not sheer off?" said the Captain.

"Eh?" whispered Bunsby, with a momentary gleam of hope.

"Sheer off," said the Captain.

"Where's the good?" retorted the forlorn sage. "She'd capter me agen."

"Try!" replied the Captain. "Cheer up! Come! Now's your time. Sheer off, Jack Bunsby!"

Jack Bunsby, however, instead of profiting by the advice, said in a doleful whisper:

"It all began in that there chest o' your'n. Why did I ever convoy her into port that night?"

"My lad," faltered the Captain, "I thought as you had come over her; not as she had come over you. A man as has got such opinions as you have!"

Mr. Bunsby merely uttered a suppressed groan.

"Come!" said the Captain, nudging him with his elbow, "now's your time! Sheer off! I'll cover your retreat. The time's a flying. Bunsby! It's for liberty. Will you once?"

Bunsby was immovable.

"Bunsby!" whispered the Captain, "will you, twice?"

Bunsby wouldn't twice.

"Bunsby!" urged the Captain, "it's for liberty; will you three times? Now or never!"

Bunsby didn't then, and didn't ever; for Mrs. Mac Stinger immediately afterwards married him.

One of the most frightful circumstances of the ceremony to the Captain, was the deadly interest exhibited therein by Juliana Mac Stinger; and the fatal concentration of her faculties, with which that promising child, already the image of her parent, observed the whole proceedings. The Captain saw in this a succession of man-traps stretching out infinitely; a series of ages of oppression and coercion, through which the seafaring line was doomed. It was a more memorable sight than the unflinching steadiness of Mrs. Bokum and the other lady, the exultation of the short gentleman in the tall hat, or even the fell inflexibility of Mrs. Mac Stinger. The Master Mac Stingers understood little of what was going on, and cared less; being chiefly engaged, during the ceremony, in treading on one another's half-boots; but the contrast afforded by those wretched infants only set off and adorned the precocious woman in Juliana. Another year or two, the Captain thought, and to lodge where that child was, would be destruction.

The ceremony was concluded by a general spring of the young family on Mr. Bunsby, whom they hailed by the endearing name of father, and from whom they solicited halfpence. These gushes of affection over, the procession was about to issue forth again, when it was delayed for some little time by an unexpected transport on the part of Alexander Mac Stinger. That dear child, it seemed, connecting a chapel with tombstones, when it was entered for any purpose apart from the ordinary religious exercises, could not be persuaded but that his mother was now to be decently



interred, and lost to him for ever. In the anguish of this conviction he screamed with astonishing force, and turned black in the face. However touching these marks of a tender disposition were to his mother, it was not in the character of that remarkable woman to permit her recognition of them to degenerate into weakness. Therefore, after vainly endeavouring to convince his reason by shakes, pokes, bawlings-out, and similar applications to his head, she led him into the air, and tried another method; which was manifested to the marriage party by a quick succession of sharp sounds, resembling applause, and, subsequently, by their seeing Alexander in contact with the coolest paving-stone in the court, greatly flushed, and loudly lamenting.

The procession being then in a condition to form itself once more, and repair to Brig Place, where a marriage feast was in readiness, returned as it had come; not without the receipt, by Bunsby, of many humorous congratulations from the populace on his recently-acquired happiness. The Captain accompanied it as far as the house-door, but, being made uneasy by the gentler manner of Mrs. Bokum, who, now that she was relieved from her engrossing duty—for the watchfulness and alacrity of the ladies sensibly diminished when the bridegroom was safely married—had greater leisure to show an interest in his behalf, there left it and the captive; faintly pleading an appointment, and promising to return presently. The Captain had another cause for uneasiness, in remorsefully reflecting that he had been the first means of Bunsby's entrapment, though certainly without intending it, and through his unbounded faith in the resources of that philosopher.

To go back to old Sol Gills at the Wooden Midshipman's, and not first go round to ask how Mr. Dombey was—albeit the house where he lay was out of London, and away on the borders of a fresh heath—was quite out of the Captain's course. So, he got a lift when he was tired, and made out the journey gaily.

The blinds were pulled down, and the house so quiet, that the Captain was almost afraid to knock; but listening at the door, he heard low voices within, very near it, and, knocking softly, was admitted by Mr. Toots. Mr. Toots and his wife had, in fact, just arrived there; having been at the Midshipman's to seek him, and having there obtained the address.

They were not so recently arrived, but that Mrs. Toots had caught the baby from somebody, taken it in her arms, and sat down on the stairs, hugging and fondling it. Florence was stooping down beside her; and no one could have said which Mrs. Toots was hugging and fondling most, the mother or the child, or which was the tenderer, Florence of Mrs. Toots, or Mrs. Toots of her, or both of the baby; it was such a little group of love and agitation.

"And is your Pa very ill, my darling dear Miss Floy?" asked Susan.

"He is very, very ill," said Florence. "But, Susan dear, you must not speak to me as you used to speak. And what's this?" said Florence, touching her clothes, in amazement. "Your old dress, dear? Your old cap, curls, and all?"

Susan burst into tears, and showered kisses on the little hand that had touched her so wonderingly.



"My dear Miss Dombey," said Mr. Toots, stepping forward, "I'll explain. She's the most extraordinary woman. There are not many to equal her! She has always said—she said before we were married, and has said to this day—that whenever you came home, she'd come to you in no dress but the dress she used to serve you in, for fear she might seem strange to you, and you might like her less. I admire the dress myself," said Mr. Toots, "of all things. I adore her in it! My dear Miss Dombey, she'll be your maid again, your nurse, all that she ever was, and more. There's no change in her. But Susan, my dear," said Mr. Toots, who had spoken with great feeling and high admiration, "all I ask is, that you'll remember the medical man, and not exert yourself too much!"

## CHAPTER LXI.

### RELENTING.

FLORENCE had need of help. Her father's need of it was sore, and made the aid of her old friend invaluable. Death stood at his pillow. A shade, already, of what he had been, shattered in mind, and perilously sick in body, he laid his weary head down on the bed his daughter's hands prepared for him, and had never raised it since.

She was always with him. He knew her, generally; though, in the wandering of his brain, he often confused the circumstances under which he spoke to her. Thus he would address her, sometimes, as if his boy were newly dead; and would tell her, that although he had said nothing of her ministering at the little bedside, yet he had seen it—he had seen it; and then would hide his face and sob, and put out his worn hand. Sometimes he would ask her for herself. "Where is Florence?"—"I am here, Papa, I am here." "I don't know her!" he would cry. "We have been parted so long, that I don't know her!" and then a staring dread would be upon him, until she could soothe his perturbation; and recal the tears she tried so hard, at other times, to dry.

He rambled through the scenes of his old pursuits—through many where Florence lost him as she listened—sometimes for hours. He would repeat that childish question, "What is money?" and ponder on it, and think about it, and reason with himself, more or less connectedly, for a good answer; as if it had never been proposed to him until that moment. He would go on with a musing repetition of the title of his old firm twenty thousand times, and, at every one of them, would turn his head upon his pillow. He would count his children—one—two—stop, and go back, and begin again in the same way.

But this was when his mind was in its most distracted state. In all the other phases of its illness, and in those to which it was most constant, it always turned on Florence. What he would oftenest do was this: he would recal that night he had so recently remembered, the night on which she came down to his room, and would imagine that his heart smote him,



and that he went out after her, and up the stairs to seek her. Then, confounding that time with the later days of the many footsteps, he would be amazed at their number, and begin to count them as he followed her. Here, of a sudden, was a bloody footprint going on among the others; and after it there began to be, at intervals, doors standing open, through which certain terrible pictures were seen, in mirrors, of haggard men, concealing something in their breasts. Still, among the many footsteps and the bloody footsteps here and there, was the step of Florence. Still she was going on before. Still the restless mind went, following and counting, ever farther, ever higher, as to the summit of a mighty tower that it took years to climb.

One day he inquired if that were not Susan who had spoken a long while ago.

Florence said "Yes, dear Papa;" and asked him would he like to see her?

He said "very much." And Susan, with no little trepidation, showed herself at his bedside.

It seemed a great relief to him. He begged her not to go; to understand that he forgave her what she had said; and that she was to stay. Florence and he were very different now, he said, and very happy. Let her look at this! He meant his drawing the gentle head down to his pillow, and laying it beside him.

He remained like this for days and weeks. At length, lying, the faint feeble semblance of a man, upon his bed, and speaking in a voice so low that they could only hear him by listening very near to his lips, he became quiet. It was dimly pleasant to him now, to lie there, with the window open, looking out at the summer sky and the trees: and, in the evening, at the sunset. To watch the shadows of the clouds and leaves, and seem to feel a sympathy with shadows. It was natural that he should. To him, life and the world were nothing else.

He began to show now that he thought of Florence's fatigue; and often taxed his weakness to whisper to her, "go and walk my dearest, in the sweet air. Go to your good husband!" One time when Walter was in his room, he beckoned him to come near, and to stoop down; and pressing his hand, whispered an assurance to him that he knew he could trust him with his child when he was dead.

It chanced one evening, towards sunset, when Florence and Walter were sitting in his room together, as he liked to see them, that Florence, having her baby in her arms, began in a low voice to sing to the little fellow, and sang the old tune she had so often sung to the dead child. He could not bear it at the time; he held up his trembling hand, imploring her to stop; but next day he asked her to repeat it, and to do so often of an evening: which she did. He listening, with his face turned away.

Florence was sitting on a certain time by his window, with her work-basket between her and her old attendant, who was still her faithful companion. He had fallen into a dose. It was a beautiful evening, with two hours of light to come yet; and the tranquillity and quiet made Florence very thoughtful. She was lost to everything for the moment, but the occasion when the so altered figure on the bed had first presented her to her beautiful mama; when a touch from Walter leaning on the back of her chair, made her start.



"My dear," said Walter; "there is some one down stairs who wishes to speak to you."

She fancied Walter looked grave, and asked him if anything had happened.

"No, no, my love!" said Walter. "I have seen the gentleman myself, and spoken with him. Nothing has happened. Will you come?"

Florence put her arm through his; and confiding her father to the black-eyed Mrs. Toots, who sat as brisk and smart at her work as black-eyed woman could, accompanied her husband down stairs. In the pleasant little parlour opening on the garden, sat a gentleman, who rose to advance towards her when she came in, but turned off, by reason of some peculiarity in his legs, and was only stopped by the table.

Florence then remembered Cousin Feenix, whom she had not at first recognised in the shade of the leaves. Cousin Feenix took her hand, and congratulated her upon her marriage.

"I could have wished, I am sure," said Cousin Feenix, sitting down as Florence sat, "to have had an earlier opportunity of offering my congratulations; but, in point of fact, so many painful occurrences have happened, treading, as a man may say, on one another's heels, that I have been in a devil of a state myself, and perfectly unfit for every description of society. The only description of society I have kept, has been my own; and it certainly is anything but flattering to a man's good opinion of his own resources, to know that, in point of fact, he has the capacity of boring himself to a perfectly unlimited extent."

Florence divined, from some indefinable constraint and anxiety in this gentleman's manner—which was always a gentleman's, in spite of the harmless little eccentricities that attached to it—and from Walter's manner no less, that something more immediately tending to some object was to follow this.

"I have been mentioning to my friend Mr. Gay, if I may be allowed to have the honour of calling him so," said Cousin Feenix, "that I am rejoiced to hear that my friend Dombey is very decidedly mending. I trust my friend Dombey will not allow his mind to be too much preyed upon, by any mere loss of fortune. I cannot say that I have ever experienced any very great loss of fortune myself: never having had, in point of fact, any great amount of fortune to lose. But as much as I could lose, I have lost; and I don't find that I particularly care about it. I know my friend Dombey to be a devilish honourable man; and it's calculated to console my friend Dombey very much, to know, that this is the universal sentiment. Even Tommy Screwzer,—man of an extremely bilious habit, with whom my friend Gay is probably acquainted—cannot say a syllable in disputation of the fact."

Florence felt, more than ever, that there was something to come; and looked earnestly for it. So earnestly, that Cousin Feenix answered, as if she had spoken.

"The fact is," said Cousin Feenix, "that my friend Gay and myself have been discussing the propriety of entreating a favour at your hands; and that I have the consent of my friend Gay—who has met me in an exceedingly kind and open manner, for which I am very much indebted to him—to solicit it. I am sensible that so amiable a lady as the lovely and accomplished daughter of my friend Dombey will not require much



urging; but I am happy to know, that I am supported by my friend Gay's influence and approval. As in my parliamentary time, when a man had a motion to make of any sort—which happened seldom in those days, for we were kept very tight in hand, the leaders on both sides being regular Martinets, which was a devilish good thing for the rank and file, like myself, and prevented our exposing ourselves continually, as a great many of us had a feverish anxiety to do—as, in my parliamentary time, I was about to say, when a man had leave to let off any little private popgun, it was always considered a great point for him to say that he had the happiness of believing that his sentiments were not without an echo in the breast of Mr. Pitt; the pilot, in point of fact, who had weathered the storm. Upon which, a devilish large number of fellows immediately cheered, and put him in spirits. Though the fact is that these fellows, being under orders to cheer most excessively whenever Mr. Pitt's name was mentioned, became so proficient that it always woke 'em. And they were so entirely innocent of what was going on, otherwise, that it used to be commonly said by Conversation Brown—four bottle man at the Treasury Board, with whom the father of my friend Gay was probably acquainted, for it was before my friend Gay's time—that if a man had risen in his place, and said that he regretted to inform the house that there was an Honourable Member in the last stage of convulsions in the Lobby, and that the Honourable Member's name was Pitt, the approbation would have been vociferous."

This postponement of the point, put Florence in a flutter; and she looked from Cousin Feenix to Walter, in increasing agitation.

"My love," said Walter, "there is nothing the matter."

"There is nothing the matter, upon my honour," said Cousin Feenix; "and I am deeply distressed at being the means of causing you a moment's uneasiness. I beg to assure you that there is nothing the matter. The favour that I have to ask is, simply—but it really does seem so exceedingly singular, that I should be in the last degree obliged to my friend Gay if he would have the goodness to break the—in point of fact, the ice," said Cousin Feenix.

Walter thus appealed to, and appealed to no less in the look that Florence turned towards him, said:

"My dearest, it is no more than this. That you will ride to London with this gentleman, whom you know."

"And my friend Gay, also—I beg your pardon!" interrupted Cousin Feenix.

"—And with me—and make a visit somewhere."

"To whom?" asked Florence, looking from one to the other.

"If I might entreat," said Cousin Feenix, "that you would not press for an answer to that question, I would venture to take the liberty of making the request."

"Do you know, Walter?" said Florence.

"Yes."

"And think it right?"

"Yes. Only because I am sure that you would, too. Though there may be reasons I very well understand, which make it better that nothing more should be said beforehand."

"If Papa is still asleep, or can spare me if he is awake, I will go immediately," said Florence. And rising quietly, and glancing at them



with a look that was a little alarmed but perfectly confiding, left the room.

When she came back, ready to bear them company, they were talking together, gravely, at the window; and Florence could not but wonder what the topic was, that had made them so well acquainted in so short a time. She did not wonder at the look of pride and love with which her husband broke off as she entered; for she never saw him, but that rested on her.

"I will leave," said Cousin Feenix, "a card for my friend Dombey, sincerely trusting that he will pick up health and strength with every returning hour. And I hope my friend Dombey will do me the favour to consider me a man who has a devilish warm admiration of his character, as, in point of fact, a British merchant and a devilish upright gentleman. My place in the country is in a most confounded state of dilapidation, but if my friend Dombey should require a change of air, and would take up his quarters there, he would find it a remarkably healthy spot—as it need be, for it's amazingly dull. If my friend Dombey suffers from bodily weakness, and would allow me to recommend what has frequently done myself good, as a man who has been extremely queer at times, and who lived pretty freely in the days when men lived very freely, I should say, let it be in point of fact the yolk of an egg, beat up with sugar and nutmeg, in a glass of sherry, and taken in the morning with a slice of dry toast. Jackson, who kept the boxing-rooms in Bond-street—man of very superior qualifications, with whose reputation my friend Gay is no doubt acquainted—used to mention that in training for the ring they substituted rum for sherry. I should recommend sherry in this case, on account of my friend Dombey being in an invalid condition; which might occasion rum to fly—in point of fact to his head—and throw him into a devil of a state."

Of all this, Cousin Feenix delivered himself with an obviously nervous and discomposed air. Then, giving his arm to Florence, and putting the strongest possible constraint upon his wilful legs which seemed determined to go out into the garden, he led her to the door, and handed her into a carriage that was ready for her reception.

Walter entered after him, and they drove away.

Their ride was six or eight miles long. When they drove through certain dull and stately streets, lying westward in London, it was growing dusk. Florence had, by this time, put her hand in Walter's; and was looking very earnestly, and with increasing agitation, into every new street into which they turned.

When the carriage stopped, at last, before that house in Brook-street, where her father's unhappy marriage had been celebrated, Florence said, "Walter, what is this? Who is here?" Walter cheering her, and not replying, she glanced up at the house-front, and saw that all the windows were shut, as if it were uninhabited. Cousin Feenix had by this time alighted, and was offering his hand.

"Are you not coming, Walter?"

"No, I will remain here. Don't tremble! there is nothing to fear, dearest Florence."

"I know that, Walter; with you so near. I am sure of that, but——"

The door was softly opened, without any knock, and cousin Feenix led her out of the summer evening air into the close dull house. More sombre



and brown than ever, it seemed to have been shut up from the wedding-day, and to have hoarded darkness and sadness ever since.

Florence ascended the dusky staircase, trembling; and stopped, with her conductor, at the drawing-room door. He opened it, without speaking, and signed an entreaty to her to advance into the inner room, while he remained there. Florence, after hesitating an instant, complied.

Sitting by the window at a table, where she seemed to have been writing or drawing, was a lady, whose head, turned away towards the dying light, was resting on her hand. Florence advancing, doubtfully, all at once stood still, as if she had lost the power of motion. The lady turned her head.

"Great Heaven!" she said, "what is this?"

"No, no!" cried Florence, shrinking back as she rose up, and putting out her hands to keep her off. "Mama!"

They stood looking at each other. Passion and pride had worn it, but it was the face of Edith, and beautiful and stately yet. It was the face of Florence, and through all the terrified avoidance it expressed, there was pity in it, sorrow, a grateful tender memory. On each face, wonder and fear were painted vividly; each, so still and silent, looking at the other over the black gulf of the irrevocable past.

Florence was the first to change. Bursting into tears, she said, from her full heart, "Oh Mama, Mama! why do we meet like this? Why were you ever kind to me when there was no one else, that we should meet like this!"

Edith stood before her, dumb and motionless. Her eyes were fixed upon her face.

"I dare not think of that," said Florence, "I am come from Papa's sick bed. We are never asunder now; we never shall be, any more. If you would have me ask his pardon, I will do it, Mama. I am almost sure he will grant it now, if I ask him. May Heaven grant it to you, too, and comfort you!"

She answered not a word.

"Walter—I am married to him, and we have a son"—said Florence, timidly, "is at the door, and has brought me here. I will tell him that you are repentant; that you are changed," said Florence, looking mournfully upon her; "and he will speak to Papa with me, I know. Is there anything but this that I can do?"

Edith, breaking her silence, without moving eye or limb, answered slowly: "The stain upon your name, upon your husband's, on your child's. Will that ever be forgiven, Florence?"

"Will it ever be, Mama? It is! Freely, freely, both by Walter and by me. If that is any consolation to you, there is nothing that you may believe more certainly. You do not—you do not," faltered Florence, "speak of Papa; but I am sure you wish that I should ask him for his forgiveness. I am sure you do."

She answered not a word.

"I will!" said Florence. "I will bring it you, if you will let me; and then, perhaps, we may take leave of each other, more like what we used to be to one another. I have not," said Florence very gently, and drawing nearer to her, "I have not shrunk back from you, Mama, because I fear you, or because I dread to be disgraced by you. I only wish to do my duty to Papa. I am very dear to him, and he is very dear



to me. But I never can forget that you were very good to me. Oh, pray to Heaven," cried Florence, falling on her bosom, "pray to Heaven, Mama, to forgive you all this sin and shame, and to forgive me if I cannot help doing this (if it is wrong), when I remember what you used to be!"

Edith, as if she fell beneath her touch, sunk down on her knees, and caught her round the neck.

"Florence!" she cried. "My better angel! Before I am mad again, before my stubbornness comes back and strikes me dumb, believe me, upon my soul I am innocent!"

"Mama!"

"Guilty of much! Guilty of that which sets a waste between us evermore. Guilty of what must separate me, through the whole remainder of my life, from purity and innocence—from you, of all the earth. Guilty of a blind and passionate resentment, of which I do not, cannot, will not, even now, repent; but not guilty with that dead man. Before God!"

Upon her knees upon the ground, she held up both her hands, and swore it.

"Florence!" she said, "purest and best of natures,—whom I love—who might have changed me long ago, and did for a time work some change even in the woman that I am,—believe me, I am innocent of that; and once more, on my desolate heart, let me lay this dear head, for the last time!"

She was moved and weeping. Had she been oftener thus in older days, she had been happier now.

"There is nothing else in all the world," she said, "that would have wrung denial from me. No love, no hatred, no hope, no threat. I said that I would die, and make no sign. I could have done so, and I would, if we had never met, Florence."

"I trust," said cousin Feenix, ambling in at the door, and speaking, half in the room, and half out of it, "that my lovely and accomplished relative will excuse my having, by a little stratagem, effected this meeting. I cannot say that I was, at first, wholly incredulous as to the possibility of my lovely and accomplished relative having, very unfortunately, committed herself with the deceased person with white teeth; because, in point of fact, one does see, in this world—which is remarkable for devilish strange arrangements, and for being decidedly the most unintelligible thing within a man's experience—very odd conjunctions of that sort. But, as I mentioned to my friend Dombey, I could not admit the criminality of my lovely and accomplished relative until it was perfectly established. And feeling, when the deceased person, was, in point of fact, destroyed in a devilish horrible manner, that her position was a very painful one—and feeling besides that our family had been a little to blame in not paying more attention to her, and that we are a careless family—and also that my aunt, though a devilish lively woman, had perhaps not been the very best of mothers—I took the liberty of seeking her in France, and offering her such protection as a man very much out at elbows could offer. Upon which occasion, my lovely and accomplished relative did me the honour to express that she believed I was, in my way, a devilish good sort of fellow; and that therefore she put herself under my protection. Which in point of fact I understood to be a kind thing on the part of my lovely and accomplished relative, as I am getting extremely shakey, and have derived great comfort from her solicitude."



Edith, who had taken Florence to a sofa, made a gesture with her hand as if she would have begged him to say no more.

"My lovely and accomplished relative," resumed Cousin Feenix, still ambling about at the door, "will excuse me if, for her satisfaction, and my own, and that of my friend Dombey, whose lovely and accomplished daughter we so much admire, I complete the thread of my observations. She will remember that, from the first, she and I have never alluded to the subject of her elopement. My impression, certainly, has always been, that there was a mystery in the affair which she could explain if so inclined. But my lovely and accomplished relative being a devilish resolute woman, I knew that she was not, in point of fact, to be trifled with, and therefore did not involve myself in any discussions. But, observing lately, that her accessible point did appear to be a very strong description of tenderness for the daughter of my friend Dombey, it occurred to me that if I could bring about a meeting, unexpected on both sides, it might lead to beneficial results. Therefore, we being in London, in the present private way, before going to the South of Italy, there to establish ourselves, in point of fact, until we go to our long homes, which is a devilish disagreeable reflection for a man, I applied myself to the discovery of the residence of my friend Gay—handsome man of an uncommonly frank disposition, who is probably known to my lovely and accomplished relative—and had the happiness of bringing his amiable wife to the present place. And now," said Cousin Feenix, with a real and genuine earnestness shining through the levity of his manner and his slipshod speech, "I do conjure my relative, not to stop half way, but to set right, as far as she can, whatever she has done wrong—not for the honour of her family, not for her own fame, not for any of those considerations which unfortunate circumstances have induced her to regard, as hollow, and in point of fact, as approaching to humbug—but because it *is* wrong, and not right."

Cousin Feenix's legs consented to take him away after this; and leaving them alone together, he shut the door.

Edith remained silent for some minutes, with Florence sitting close beside her. Then she took from her bosom a sealed paper.

"I debated with myself a long time," she said in a low voice, "whether to write this at all, in case of dying suddenly or by accident, and feeling the want of it upon me. I have deliberated, ever since, when and how to destroy it. Take it, Florence. The truth is written in it."

"Is it for Papa?" asked Florence.

"It is for whom you will," she answered. "It is given to you, and is obtained by you. He never could have had it otherwise."

Again they sat silent, in the deepening darkness.

"Mama," said Florence, "he has lost his fortune; he has been at the point of death; he may not recover, even now. Is there any word that I shall say to him from you?"

"Did you tell me," asked Edith, "that you were very dear to him?"

"Yes!" said Florence, in a thrilling voice.

"Tell him I am sorry that we ever met."

"No more?" said Florence after a pause.

"Tell him, if he asks, that I do not repent of what I have done—not yet—for if it were to do again to-morrow, I should do it. But if he is a changed man—"



She stopped. There was something in the silent touch of Florence's hand that stopped her.

"—But that being a changed man, he knows, now, it would never be. Tell him I wish it never had been."

"May I say," said Florence, "that you grieved to hear of the afflictions he has suffered?"

"Not," she replied, "if they have taught him that his daughter is very dear to him. He will not grieve for them himself, one day, if they have brought that lesson, Florence."

"You wish well to him, and would have him happy. I am sure you would!" said Florence. "Oh! let me be able, if I have the occasion at some future time, to say so?"

Edith sat with her dark eyes gazing stedfastly before her, and did not reply until Florence had repeated her entreaty; when she drew her hand within her arm, and said, with the same thoughtful gaze upon the night outside:

"Tell him that if, in his own present, he can find any reason to compassionate my past, I sent word that I asked him to do so. Tell him that if, in his own present, he can find a reason to think less bitterly of me, I asked him to do so. Tell him, that, dead as we are to one another, never more to meet on this side of eternity, he knows there is one feeling in common between us now, that there never was before."

Her sternness seemed to yield, and there were tears in her dark eyes.

"I trust myself to that," she said, "for his better thoughts of me, and mine of him. When he loves his Florence most, he will hate me least. When he is most proud and happy in her and her children, he will be most repentant of his own part in the dark vision of our married life. At that time, I will be repentant too—let him know it then—and think that when I thought so much of all the causes that had made me what I was, I needed to have allowed more for the causes that had made him what he was. I will try, then, to forgive him his share of blame. Let him try to forgive me mine!"

"Oh Mama!" said Florence. "How it lightens my heart, even in such a meeting and parting, to hear this!"

"Strange words in my own ears," said Edith, "and foreign to the sound of my own voice! But even if I had been the wretched creature I have given him occasion to believe me, I think I could have said them still, hearing that you and he were very dear to one another. Let him, when you are dearest, ever feel that he is most forbearing in his thoughts of me—that I am most forbearing in my thoughts of him! Those are the last words I send him! Now, good bye, my life!"

She clasped her in her arms, and seemed to pour out all her woman's soul of love and tenderness at once.

"This kiss for your child! These kisses for a blessing on your head! My own dear Florence, my sweet girl, farewell!"

"To meet again!" cried Florence.

"Never again! Never again! When you leave me in this dark room, think that you have left me in the grave. Remember only that I was once, and that I loved you!"

And Florence left her, seeing her face no more, but accompanied by her embraces and caresses to the last.



Cousin Feenix met her at the door, and took her down to Walter in the dingy dining-room, upon whose shoulder she laid her head weeping.

"I am devilish sorry," said Cousin Feenix, lifting his wristbands to his eyes in the simplest manner possible, and without the least concealment, "that the lovely and accomplished daughter of my friend Dombey and amiable wife of my friend Gay, should have had her sensitive nature so very much distressed and cut up by the interview which is just concluded. But I hope and trust I have acted for the best, and that my honourable friend Dombey will find his mind relieved by the disclosures which have taken place. I exceedingly lament that my friend Dombey should have got himself, in point of fact, into the devil's own state of conglomeration by an alliance with our family; but am strongly of opinion that if it hadn't been for the infernal scoundrel Barker—man with white teeth—everything would have gone on pretty smoothly. In regard to my relative who does me the honour to have formed an uncommonly good opinion of myself, I can assure the amiable wife of my friend Gay, that she may rely on my being, in point of fact, a father to her. And in regard to the changes of human life, and the extraordinary manner in which we are perpetually conducting ourselves, all I can say is, with my friend Shakespeare—man who wasn't for an age but for all time, and with whom my friend Gay is no doubt acquainted—that it's like the shadow of a dream."

## CHAPTER LXII.

### FINAL.

A BOTTLE that has been long excluded from the light of day, and is hoary with dust and cobwebs, has been brought into the sunshine; and the golden wine within it sheds a lustre on the table.

It is the last bottle of the old Madeira.

"You are quite right, Mr. Gills," says Mr. Dombey. "This is a very rare and most delicious wine."

The Captain, who is of the party, beams with joy. There is a very halo of delight round his glowing forehead.

"We always promised ourselves, Sir," observes Mr. Gills, "Ned and myself, I mean—"

Mr. Dombey nods at the Captain, who shines more and more with speechless gratification.

—"that we would drink this, one day or other, to Walter safe at home: though such a home we never thought of. If you don't object to our old whim, Sir, let us devote this first glass to Walter and his wife."

"To Walter and his wife!" says Mr. Dombey. "Florence, my child"—and turns to kiss her.

"To Walter and his wife!" says Mr. Toots.

"To Wal'r and his wife!" exclaims the Captain. "Hooroar!" and the Captain exhibiting a strong desire to clink his glass against some other glass, Mr. Dombey, with a ready hand, holds out his. The others



follow; and there is a blithe and merry ringing, as of a little peal of marriage bells.

Other buried wine grows older, as the old Madeira did in its time; and dust and cobwebs thicken on the bottles.

Mr. Dombey is a white-haired gentleman, whose face bears heavy marks of care and suffering; but they are traces of a storm that has passed on for ever, and left a clear evening in its track.

Ambitious projects trouble him no more. His only pride is in his daughter and her husband. He has a silent, thoughtful, quiet manner, and is always with his daughter. Miss Tox is not unfrequently of the family party, and is quite devoted to it, and a great favourite. Her admiration of her once stately patron is, and has been ever since the morning of her shock in Princess' Place, platonic, but not weakened in the least.

Nothing has drifted to him from the wreck of his fortunes, but a certain annual sum that comes he knows not how, with an earnest entreaty that he will not seek to discover, and with the assurance that it is a debt, and an act of reparation. He has consulted with his old clerk about this, who is clear it may be honourably accepted, and has no doubt it arises out of some forgotten transaction in the times of the old House.

That hazel-eyed bachelor, a bachelor no more, is married now, and to the sister of the grey-haired Junior. He visits his old chief sometimes, but seldom. There is a reason in the grey-haired Junior's history, and yet a stronger reason in his name, why he should keep retired from his old employer; and as he lives with his sister and her husband, they participate in that retirement. Walter sees them sometimes—Florence too—and the pleasant house resounds with profound duets arranged for the Piano-Forte and Violoncello, and with the labours of Harmonious Blacksmiths.

And how goes the wooden Midshipman in these changed days? Why, here he still is, right leg foremost, hard at work upon the hackney coaches, and more on the alert than ever, being newly painted from his cocked hat to his buckled shoes; and up above him, in golden characters, these names shine refulgent, GILLS AND CUTTLE.

Not another stroke of business does the Midshipman achieve beyond his usual easy trade. But they do say, in a circuit of some half-mile round the blue umbrella in Leadenhall Market, that some of Mr. Gills's old investments are coming out wonderfully well; and that instead of being behind the time in those respects, as he supposed, he was, in truth, a little before it, and had to wait the fulness of the time and the design. The whisper is that Mr. Gills's money has begun to turn itself, and that it is turning itself over and over pretty briskly. Certain it is that, standing at his shop-door, in his coffee-coloured suit, with his chronometer in his pocket, and his spectacles on his forehead, he don't appear to break his heart at customers not coming, but looks very jovial and contented, though full as misty as of yore.

As to his partner, Captain Cuttle, there is a fiction of a business in the Captain's mind which is better than any reality. The Captain is as satisfied of the Midshipman's importance to the commerce and navigation of the country, as he could possibly be, if no ship left the Port of London without the Midshipman's assistance. His delight in his own name over the door, is inexhaustible. He crosses the street, twenty times a-day, to



look at it from the other side of the way; and invariably says, on these occasions, "Ed'ard Cuttle, my lad, if your mother could ha' know'd as as you would ever be a man o' science, the good old creetur would ha' been took aback in-deed!"

But here is Mr. Toots descending on the Midshipman with violent rapidity, and Mr. Toots's face is very red as he bursts into the little parlour.

"Captain Gills," says Mr. Toots, "and Mr. Sols, I am happy to inform you that Mrs. Toots has had an increase to her family."

"And it does her credit!" cries the Captain.

"I give you joy, Mr. Toots!" says old Sol.

"Thank'ee," chuckles Mr. Toots, "I'm very much obliged to you. I knew that you'd be glad to hear, and so I came down myself. We're positively getting on, you know. There's Florence, and Susan, and now here's another little stranger."

"A female stranger!" inquires the Captain.

"Yes, Captain Gills," says Mr. Toots, "and I'm glad of it. The oftener we can repeat that most extraordinary woman, my opinion is, the better!"

"Stand by!" says the Captain, turning to the old case-bottle with no throat—for it is evening, and the Midshipman's usual moderate provisions of pipes and glasses is on the board. "Here's to her, and may she have ever so many more!"

"Thank'ee Captain Gills," says the delighted Mr. Toots. "I echo the sentiment. If you'll allow me, as my so doing cannot be unpleasant to anybody, under the circumstances, I think I'll take a pipe."

Mr. Toots begins to smoke, accordingly, and in the openness of his heart is very loquacious.

"Of all the remarkable instances that that delightful woman has given of her excellent sense, Captain Gills and Mr. Sols," says Toots, "I think none is more remarkable than the perfection with which she has understood my devotion to Miss Dombey."

Both his auditors assent.

"Because, you know," says Mr. Toots, "I have never changed my sentiments towards Miss Dombey. They are the same as ever. She is the same bright vision to me, at present, that she was before I made Walters's acquaintance. When Mrs. Toots and myself first began to talk of—in short, of the tender passion, you know, Captain Gills."

"Aye aye, my lad," says the Captain, "as makes us all slue round—for which you'll overhaul the book—"

"I shall certainly do so, Captain Gills," says Mr. Toots, with great earnestness; "when we first began to mention such subjects, I explained that I was what you may call a Blighted flower, you know."

The Captain approves of this figure greatly; and murmurs that no flower as blows, is like the rose.

"But Lord bless me," pursues Mr. Toots, "she was as entirely conscious of the state of my feelings as I was myself. There was nothing I could tell *her*. She was the only person who could have stood between me and the silent Tomb, and she did it, in a manner to command my everlasting admiration. She knows that there's nobody in the world I look up to, as I do to Miss Dombey. She knows that there's nothing on



earth I wouldn't do for Miss Dombey. She knows that I consider her the most beautiful, the most amiable, the most angelic of her sex. What is her observation upon that? The perfection of sense. 'My dear you're right. I think so too.'

"And so do I!" says the Captain.

"So do I," says Sol Gills.

"Then," resumes Mr. Toots, after some contemplative pulling at his pipe, during which his visage has expressed the most contented reflection, "what an observant woman my wife is! What sagacity she possesses! What remarks she makes! It was only last night, when we were sitting in the enjoyment of connubial bliss—which, upon my word and honour, is a feeble term to express my feelings in the society of my wife—that she said how remarkable it was to consider the present position of our friend Walters. 'Here,' observes my wife, 'he is, released from sea-going, after that first long voyage with his young bride'—as you know he was, Mr. Sols."

"Quite true," says the Old Instrument Maker, rubbing his hands.

"Here he is," says my wife, "'released from that, immediately; appointed by the same establishment to a post of great trust and confidence at home; showing himself again worthy; mounting up the ladder with the greatest expedition; beloved by every body; assisted by his uncle at the very best possible time of his fortunes'—which I think is the case Mr. Sols? My wife is always correct."

"Why yes, yes—some of our lost ships, freighted with gold, have come home, truly," returns old Sol, laughing. "Small craft, Mr. Toots, but serviceable to my boy!"

"Exactly so!" says Mr. Toots. "You'll never find my wife wrong. 'Here he is,' says that most remarkable woman, 'so situated,—and what follows? What follows?' observed Mrs. Toots. Now pray remark, Captain Gills, and Mr. Sols, the depth of my wife's penetration. 'Why that, under the very eye of Mr. Dombey, there is a foundation going on, upon which a—an Edifice;' that was Mrs. Toots's word," says Mr. Toots exultingly, "'is gradually rising, perhaps to equal, perhaps excel, that of which he was once the head, and the small beginnings of which (a common fault, but a bad one, Mrs. Toots said) escaped his memory. Thus,' said my wife, 'from his daughter, after all, another Dombey and Son will ascend'—no 'rise'; that was Mrs. Toots's word—'triumphant!'"

Mr. Toots, with the assistance of his pipe—which he is extremely glad to devote to oratorical purposes, as its proper use affects him with a very uncomfortable sensation—does such grand justice to this prophetic sentence of his wife's, that the Captain, throwing away his glazed hat in a state of the greatest excitement, cries:

"Sol Gills, you man of science and my ould pardner, what did I tell Wal'r to overhaul on that there night when he first took to business? Was it this here quotation, 'Turn again Whittington Lord Mayor of London, and when you are old you will never depart from it.' Was it them words, Sol Gills?"

"It certainly was, Ned," replied the Old Instrument Maker. "I remember well."

"Then I tell you what," says the Captain, leaning back in his chair,



and composing his chest for a prodigious roar. "I'll give you Lovely Peg right through; and stand by, both on you, for the chorus!"

Buried wine grows older, as the old Madeira did, in its time; and dust and cobwebs thicken on the bottles.

Autumn days are shining, and on the sea-beach there are often a young lady, and a white-haired gentleman. With them, or near them, are two children: boy and girl. And an old dog is generally in their company.

The white-haired gentleman walks with the little boy, talks with him, helps him in his play, attends upon him, watches him, as if he were the object of his life. If he is thoughtful, the white-haired gentleman is thoughtful too; and sometimes when the child is sitting by his side, and looks up in his face, asking him questions, he takes the tiny hand in his, and holding it, forgets to answer. Then the child says:

"What, grandpapa, am I so like my poor little uncle again?"

"Yes, Paul. But he was weak, and you are very strong."

"Oh yes, I am very strong."

"And he lay on a little bed beside the sea, and you can run about."

And so they range away again, busily, for the white-haired gentleman likes best to see the child free and stirring; and as they go about together, the story of the bond between them goes about, and follows them.

But no one, except Florence, knows the measure of the white-haired gentleman's affection for the girl. That story never goes about. The child herself almost wonders at a certain secrecy he keeps in it. He hoards her in his heart. He cannot bear to see a cloud upon her face. He cannot bear to see her sit apart. He fancies that she feels a slight, when there is none. He steals away to look at her, in her sleep. It pleases him to have her come, and wake him in the morning. He is fondest of her and most loving to her, when there is no creature by. The child says then, sometimes:

"Dear grandpapa, why do you cry when you kiss me?"

He only answers "Little Florence! Little Florence!" and smooths away the curls that shade her earnest eyes.

THE END.

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## ERRATA.

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Page 362, bottom line, "sending his compliments to *Mr.* Dombey,"—read "*Mrs.*"

Page 364, line 13 from bottom. For "*Jack Adam's,*" read "*Jack Adams*".

Page 365, line 20 from bottom, after "regularly sold," insert one inverted comma within the two inverted commas.

Page 381, line 23 from top. For "about it—the Cap'en don't," read "about it, the Cap'en don't," (substituting a comma for the dash).

Page 494, first line of the chapter. For "*down* stairs," read "*above* stairs."

Page 497, line 29 from top. For "*you too,*" read "*you two.*"



ERRATA

Page 100, column 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 101, line 12. "The" should be "The".  
Page 102, line 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 103, line 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 104, line 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 105, line 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 106, line 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 107, line 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 108, line 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 109, line 1. "The" should be "The".  
Page 110, line 1. "The" should be "The".



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PREFACE

THIS STORY IS DEDICATED,

WITH GREAT ESTEEM,

TO

THE MARCHIONESS OF NORMANBY.



THIS STORY IS DEDICATED

TO THE GREAT NATION

THE MARCHIONESS OF NORMANDY



## PREFACE.

---

I CANNOT forego my usual opportunity of saying farewell to my readers in this greeting-place, though I have only to acknowledge the unbounded warmth and earnestness of their sympathy in every stage of the journey we have just concluded.

If any of them have felt a sorrow in one of the principal incidents on which this fiction turns, I hope it may be a sorrow of that sort which endears the sharers in it, one to another. This is not unselfish in me. I may claim to have felt it, at least as much as anybody else; and I would fain be remembered kindly for my part in the experience.

DEVONSHIRE TERRACE,

*Twenty-Fourth March, 1848.*



## PREFACE

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THE AUTHOR,  
TONG-FOOT, MARY, 1848.



## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I. DOMBEY AND SON . . . . .	1
CHAP. II. In which Timely Provision is made for an Emergency that will sometimes arise in the best regulated Families . . . .	8
CHAP. III. In which Mr. Dombey, as a Man and a Father, is seen at the head of the Home-Department . . . . .	16
CHAP. IV. In which some more First Appearances are made on the Stage of these Adventures . . . . .	24
CHAP. V. Paul's Progress and Christening . . . . .	33
CHAP. VI. Paul's Second Deprivation . . . . .	45
CHAP. VII. A Bird's-eye glimpse of Miss Tox's Dwelling-place ; also of the State of Miss Tox's Affections . . . . .	61
CHAP. VIII. Paul's further Progress, Growth, and Character . . . .	65
CHAP. IX. In which the Wooden Midshipman gets into Trouble . . .	79
CHAP. X. Containing the Sequel of the Midshipman's Disaster . . . .	88
CHAP. XI. Paul's Introduction to a new Scene . . . . .	97
CHAP. XII. Paul's Education . . . . .	107



	PAGE
CHAP. XIII. Shipping Intelligence and Office Business . . . . .	120
CHAP. XIV. Paul grows more and more Old-fashioned, and goes Home for the Holidays . . . . .	129
CHAP. XV. Amazing Artfulness of Captain Cuttle, and a new Pursuit for Walter Gay . . . . .	146
CHAP. XVI. What the Waves were always saying . . . . .	157
CHAP. XVII. Captain Cuttle does a little Business for the young people . . . . .	161
CHAP. XVIII. Father and Daughter . . . . .	169
CHAP. XIX. Walter goes away . . . . .	183
CHAP. XX. Mr. Dombey goes upon a Journey . . . . .	193
CHAP. XXI. New Faces . . . . .	203
CHAP. XXII. A Trifle of Management by Mr. Carker the Manager . . . . .	211
CHAP. XXIII. Florence Solitary, and the Midshipman Mysterious . . . . .	225
CHAP. XXIV. The Study of a Loving Heart . . . . .	241
CHAP. XXV. Strange News of Uncle Sol . . . . .	250
CHAP. XXVI. Shadows of the Past and Future . . . . .	257
CHAP. XXVII. Deeper Shadows . . . . .	269
CHAP. XXVIII. Alterations . . . . .	281
CHAP. XXIX. The Opening of the Eyes of Mrs. Chick . . . . .	289
CHAP. XXX. The Interval before the Marriage . . . . .	297
CHAP. XXXI. The Wedding . . . . .	309



# CONTENTS.

xiii

PAGE

CHAP. XXXII. The Wooden Midshipman goes to Pieces . . . . .	321
CHAP. XXXIII. Contrasts . . . . .	334
CHAP. XXXIV. Another Mother and Daughter . . . . .	343
CHAP. XXXV. The Happy Pair . . . . .	353
CHAP. XXXVI. Housewarming . . . . .	361
CHAP. XXXVII. More Warnings than One . . . . .	370
CHAP. XXXVIII. Miss Tox improves an Old Acquaintance . . . . .	378
CHAP. XXXIX. Further Adventures of Captain Edward Cuttle, Mariner . . . . .	385
CHAP. XL. Domestic Relations . . . . .	397
CHAP. XLI. New Voices on the Waves . . . . .	409
CHAP. XLII. Confidential and Accidental . . . . .	417
CHAP. XLIII. The Watches of the Night . . . . .	428
CHAP. XLIV. A Separation . . . . .	435
CHAP. XLV. The Trusty Agent . . . . .	442
CHAP. XLVI. Recognizant and Reflective . . . . .	449
CHAP. XLVII. The Thunderbolt . . . . .	458
CHAP. XLVIII. The Flight of Florence . . . . .	472
CHAP. XLIX. The Midshipman makes a Discovery . . . . .	481
CHAP. L. Mr. Toots's Complaint . . . . .	494



	PAGE
CHAP. LI. Mr. Dombey and the World . . . . .	507
CHAP. LII. Secret Intelligence . . . . .	513
CHAP. LIII. More Intelligence . . . . .	524
CHAP. LIV. The Fugitives . . . . .	536
CHAP. LV. Rob the Grinder loses his Place . . . . .	545
CHAP. LVI. Several People Delighted, and the Game Chicken Disgusted . . . . .	554
CHAP. LVII. Another Wedding . . . . .	571
CHAP. LVIII. After a Lapse . . . . .	577
CHAP. LIX. Retribution . . . . .	588
CHAP. LX. Chiefly Matrimonial . . . . .	602
CHAP. LXI. Relenting . . . . .	611
CHAP. LXII. Final . . . . .	620



## LIST OF PLATES.

	PAGE
FRONTISPIECE AND VIGNETTE	
MISS TOX INTRODUCES THE PARTY . . . . .	10
THE DOMBEY FAMILY . . . . .	22
THE CHRISTENING PARTY . . . . .	40
POLLY RESCUES THE CHARITABLE GRINDER . . . . .	50
PAUL AND MRS. PIPCHIN . . . . .	75
CAPTAIN CUTTLE CONSOLES HIS FRIEND . . . . .	87
DOCTOR BLIMBER'S YOUNG GENTLEMEN AS THEY APPEARED WHEN ENJOYING THEMSELVES . . . . .	113
PAUL'S EXERCISES . . . . .	117
PAUL GOES HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS . . . . .	145
PROFOUND COGITATION OF CAPTAIN CUTTLE . . . . .	151
POOR PAUL'S FRIEND . . . . .	179
THE WOODEN MIDSHIPMAN ON THE LOOK OUT . . . . .	185
MAJOR BAGSTOCK IS DELIGHTED TO HAVE THAT OPPORTUNITY . . . . .	204
MR. TOOTS BECOMES PARTICULAR—DIOGENES ALSO . . . . .	223
SOLEMN REFERENCE IS MADE TO MR. BUNSBY . . . . .	238
MR. CARKER INTRODUCES HIMSELF TO FLORENCE AND THE SKETTLES FAMILY . . . . .	249
JOE B. IS SLY, SIR; DEVILISH SLY . . . . .	267
MR. DOMBEY INTRODUCES HIS DAUGHTER FLORENCE . . . . .	288



	PAGE
THE EYES OF MRS. CHICK ARE OPENED TO LUCRETIA TOX . . . . .	294
COMING HOME FROM CHURCH . . . . .	316
A VISITOR OF DISTINCTION . . . . .	325
THE REJECTED ALMS . . . . .	352
MRS. DOMBEY AT HOME . . . . .	366
MISS TOX PAYS A VISIT TO THE TOODLE FAMILY . . . . .	381
THE MIDSHIPMAN IS BOARDED BY THE ENEMY . . . . .	394
A CHANCE MEETING . . . . .	403
MR. DOMBEY AND HIS "CONFIDENTIAL AGENT" . . . . .	424
FLORENCE PARTS FROM A VERY OLD FRIEND . . . . .	439
ABSTRACTION AND RECOGNITION . . . . .	450
FLORENCE AND EDITH ON THE STAIRCASE . . . . .	469
THE SHADOW IN THE LITTLE PARLOR . . . . .	491
MR. DOMBEY AND THE WORLD . . . . .	508
SECRET INTELLIGENCE . . . . .	516
MR. CARKER IN HIS HOUR OF TRIUMPH . . . . .	539
ON THE DARK ROAD . . . . .	547
AN ARRIVAL . . . . .	565
"LET HIM REMEMBER IT IN THAT ROOM, YEARS TO COME" . . . . .	595
ANOTHER WEDDING . . . . .	607



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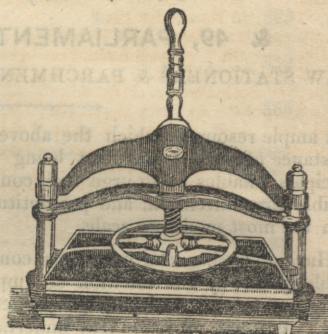


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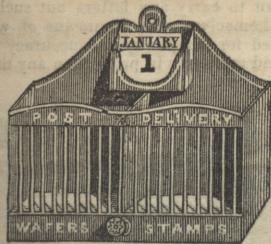
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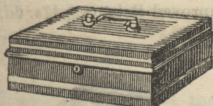
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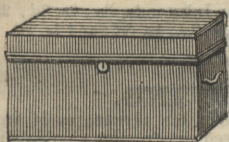
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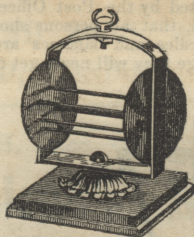
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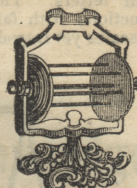


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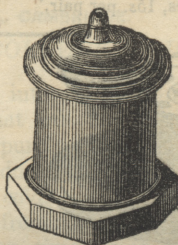


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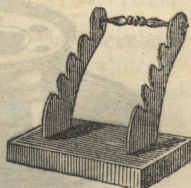


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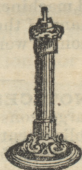


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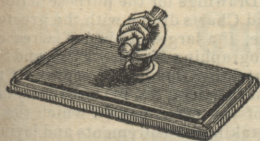
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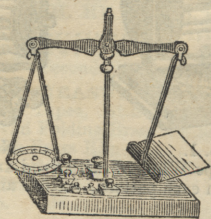
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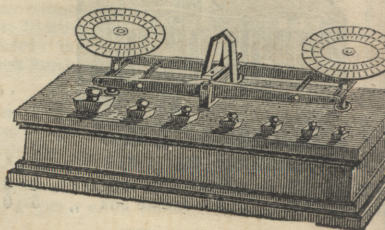
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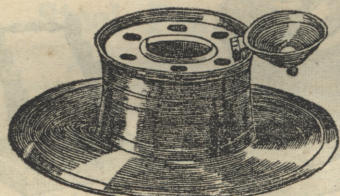
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THE virtues of DANDELION have long been held in high estimation as a diet drink, in liver complaints, and other chronic visceral affections; but the difficulty of obtaining it in all seasons of the year, has impeded the wishes of the Profession, in extending and promoting its more general use.

The present preparation is, therefore, offered with confidence to the public, as possessing all the properties of the plant, and retaining, unimpaired, its various medicinal virtues for any length of time, and in any climate.

It operates as a gentle diuretic and diaphoretic, and is slightly aperient; it is, therefore, much recommended in chronic derangements of the stomach.

This valuable medicinal agent may be obtained (wholesale and retail), in a high state of perfection, and with full directions for use, of the makers,

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# TESTIMONIALS

6, Vere Street, Oxford Street, London ;

And 68, Broad Street, Worcester.

By the favour of a nobleman residing in the county of Worcester, we became possessed of a receipt for preparing a Sauce of exquisite flavour and pungency, which, being issued to the public under the title of the "WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE," very speedily established itself, and became an article of general demand, giving universal satisfaction, and eliciting unbounded commendation from families of the highest consideration—from the mansion of the Queen Dowager, some of the principal Club Houses in London, and the first Hotels in the Kingdom—when unscrupulous dealers, both in England and Ireland, taking advantage of the reputation thus gained, prepared and vended imitations under the same name, and labelled in so similar a manner as to enable them to pass off a spurious article for the Genuine, much to the disappointment of purchasers, and greatly to our injury. As these practices are continued, we feel it due to the public and to ourselves to announce, by advertisement, that our names (LEA and PERRINS) are printed upon the Labels, and impressed upon the Metallic Capsule which covers the top of every Bottle of the Genuine WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE.

The inferior quality of the various imitations tending to injure the reputation of our Sauce, with purchasers who are unacquainted with our Names as the Sole Proprietors, will, we trust, be considered a sufficient reason for thus directing attention to the means of distinguishing THE GENUINE, and of respectfully urging the necessity of their asking for LEA and PERRINS' Worcestershire Sauce, which may be obtained of any of the principal Dealers in Sauces throughout the United Kingdom and British Possessions—in the United States of America, and generally in all parts of the World.

We beg to annex a Copy of a few of the testimonials received ; and, soliciting the favour of your patronage,

We are, your obedient servants,

LEA and PERRINS.



## TESTIMONIALS.

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*Witley Court, Feb. 28, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—I have great pleasure and satisfaction in bearing testimony to the rare qualities of your celebrated Worcestershire Sauce, which has long been an accompaniment to the Royal Table; and from its peculiar piquancy, combined with exquisite flavour, is now an established favourite. It is often spoken of by families of the highest rank, who have the honour of visiting the Royal Residence.

M. MALARET, Chef de Cuisine.

*To Messrs. Lea and Perrins, Worcester.*

*Windham Club, Feb. 23, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—In compliance with your request I beg to state, that of all other Sauces used at this Club, Lea and Perrins' seems to be the favourite; a greater proof of its good qualities I cannot offer.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

THOMAS ROCHE, Steward.

*Conservative Club, Feb. 27, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—At the request of several members of this Club, I introduced your Worcestershire Sauce, and have great pleasure in saying that it has given universal satisfaction.

I am, Gentlemen, your most obedient,

SAMUEL HALLAM, Steward.

*To Messrs. Lea and Perrins, Worcester.*

*Union Club, Feb. 28, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—The members of this Club have been for some time using your Worcestershire Sauce, and I beg to state, that it is highly approved of by them—has superseded several other sauces formerly in use at this establishment—is much called for, and now become the general favourite.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

*To Messrs. Lea and Perrins.*

R. WHEELER, Steward.

*The Queen's, Cheltenham, Feb. 28, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—I have no hesitation in bearing testimony to the excellent qualities of your Worcestershire Sauce, as the numerous families of the first rank in this kingdom, and from the continent of Europe, and India, who honour "The Queen's" by their patronage, enable me to speak confidently of the very general estimation in which it is held by them; and from my own experience of its merits and usefulness, I believe it to be, of its kind, quite unequalled.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

*To Messrs. Lea and Perrins.*

S. G. GRIFFITH.

### WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE.

The above excellent Sauce has been known to me from its first introduction to the public by the proprietors, Messrs. Lea and Perrins of Worcester. It was then recommended to my notice by a friend in London, whose knowledge in such matters is at once valuable and conclusive. It has been constantly used in my establishment for several years, and continues to receive the unanimous commendation of families of the highest consideration in the University and County of Cambridge.

*All Saint's, Cambridge, March 3, 1846.* EDW. LITCHFIELD.



*Royal Western Hotel, Bristol, Feb. 21, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—Your Worcestershire Sauce is used at this hotel, and very much approved, being frequently inquired for in the coffeeroom; and I have no hesitation in saying, that I consider it one of the best articles of its kind.

*To Messrs. Lea and Perrins, Worcester.*

ROBERT P. HAMS.

It is an old but true saying, that "Good wine needs no bush"; the same remark applies to the Worcestershire Sauce, prepared by Lea and Perrins. It is only necessary for us to make this one observation—that, for flavour and piquancy, it exceeds all the other sauces that are now before the public, and has only to be tasted to be appreciated. M. Soyer, the celebrated chef-de-cuisine at the Reform Club, has given his decided approval of it, and the members of that large and magnificent establishment are among its patrons.—*South London News, Jan. 24.*

*Angel Hotel, Oxford, Feb. 20, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—I have much pleasure in stating, that your Worcestershire Sauce, for steaks, cold meats, and every variety of made-dishes, is most invaluable; and I can strongly recommend it as surpassing in its various qualities, the great variety of sauces now in use.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

*Messrs. Lea and Perrins.*

S. G. GRIFFITH.

*Great Western Steam Ship, June 6, 1843.*

The cabin of the Great Western has been regularly supplied with Lea and Perrins' Worcestershire Sauce, which is adapted for every variety of dish—from turtle to beef, from salmon to steaks—to all of which it gives a famous relish. I have great pleasure in recommending this excellent sauce to captains and passengers, for its capital flavour, and as the best accompaniment, of its kind, for any voyage.

JAMES HOSKEN.

The truth of the familiar adage, "Appetite makes the best sauce," which ought never to have dropped from the lips of a Frenchman, is boldly disputed by Messrs. Lea and Perrins; and not without justice, for since their invention the adage is inverted—the sauce positively creating the appetite.—*Court Journal, April 15, 1843.*

COPY OF A LETTER FROM MR. J. COCKBURN.

*January 10, 1845.*

Sir,—When about to proceed to the West Indies in August last, you favoured me with a bottle of Lea and Perrins' Worcestershire Sauce, on trial; before opening which, I submitted it to the test of a four months' voyage in the tropics, and on coming home in December, it was opened in the latitude of the Azores, and found in the highest state of preservation. On submitting it to the cook, who is a man of great experience, having been seven years in the London Tavern, and eight years at sea, he declared it to be the best sauce ever put into his hands; and I am persuaded, from the fact of its being adapted to all kinds of dishes, that Lea and Perrins' Sauce will go far to supersede the great variety of stores hitherto indispensable on board ships when employed on long voyages.

I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

JAMES COCKBURN,

Acting Providore, R.M.S.P. 'Thames.'

*To Mr. John Osborn, Royal Mail Steam Packet Office,*

*Moorgate Street.*



*Lea and Perrins' Worcestershire Sauce.*—If ever proprietors of a Sauce felt proud of universal flattering encomiums, it must be Messrs. Lea and Perrins. It is no very easy matter to please the public, but far less to please the vast inundative number of epicures; but the result being most satisfactory with regard to the Worcestershire Sauce, and the general demand for it, we pronounce Messrs. Lea and Perrins to be crowned by the goddess of epicureans. The Worcestershire Sauce has a peculiar *goût* of its own, full of richness, piquancy, excellent for indigestion, and we should say unrivalled for promoting the appetite, and indispensable for the dining-room table.—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

*Imperial Hotel, Liverpool, March 25, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—The other day I submitted to the approval of the gentlemen who frequent my coffeeroom, your Worcestershire Sauce. I have much pleasure in stating their opinion was unanimous as to its excellence. For my own part, I consider it superior to any sauce I have ever used, and willingly add my testimony of its general usefulness and exquisite piquancy.

Most respectfully yours,

Messrs. Lea and Perrins, Worcester.

JAMES MORGAN.

*Brunswick Hotel, Jermyn Street, London, March 25, 1846.*

Sirs,—I have much pleasure in stating to you my high approval of your Worcestershire Sauce: it is most excellent, and peculiarly adapted for all domestic purposes, and will be constantly used at my hotel, which is honoured with the favours of noblemen and gentlemen.

To Messrs. Lea and Perrins,

I am, Sirs, yours respectfully,

6, Vere St., London.

JOSEPH PAYNE.

*Fladong's Hotel, 144, Oxford St., London, March, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—I have much pleasure in testifying to the good qualities of your Worcestershire Sauce, as applicable to all kinds of meat and made-dishes, fish, game, &c., considering it to be, without exception, the best sauce in use.

To Messrs. Lea and Perrins, Worcester.

WM. LOVEGROVE.

*Foley Arms Hotel, Great Malvern, Feb. 18, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—In reply to your note, I beg to state, that your Worcestershire Sauce continues to be highly approved at this hotel, and from its rich flavour and high zest, I consider it the best and most economical sauce in use.

To Messrs. Lea and Perrins, Worcester.

JOHN ARCHER.

*Golden Cross Hotel, London, Feb. 18, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—In reply to your communication this morning, I have pleasure in bearing testimony to the approval with which your Worcestershire Sauce has been generally received in this hotel. As an useful and relishing condiment, I prefer it to most others of the kind.

To Messrs. Lea and Perrins,

I remain yours truly,

Broad Street, Worcester.

THOMAS GARDINER.

*Caledonian United Service Club, Edinburgh, April 6, 1846.*

Gentlemen,—Your Worcestershire Sauce has gained great celebrity in Edinburgh, and is in constant use at this hotel: it is highly approved for the very agreeable zest which it imparts to gravies and made-dishes; and I have no hesitation in saying, that in my opinion it is an excellent Sauce.

I am, &c.,

To Messrs. Lea and Perrins, Worcester.

JAMES ELLIS.



# ESSENCE OF COFFEE.

---

THE immensely increased consumption of Coffee in this country, having called for improved methods of preparing it for use, it is matter of surprise, that some more uniform and approved method of extracting and retaining the essential properties of the berry, has not been adopted and followed. But up to the present time, it is an admitted fact, that really good Coffee is seldom met with, the process of *making* having either failed to *extract* the *aroma*, or to have dissipated this most estimable quality.

LEA & PERRINS therefore present their preparation, as containing all the desirable qualities of the finest Coffee, extracted by means of steam, in a manner to obtain the whole of the essential part, and retain the same in a concentrated form for ordinary use, whereby any required quantity of most excellent Coffee can be made at any moment, by the addition of boiling water.

The cost of Coffee made with this preparation, is not more than of that made in the usual manner; whereas, in the avoidance of trouble, being enabled (at the table) to regulate the strength, and never using more than is required, it is obvious there must be great economy.

On travel, and by those who require this delicious beverage at uncertain hours, the ESSENCE OF COFFEE will be at once appreciated; and its advantages only require to be known to ensure its very general use.

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WHOLESALE BY

**LEA & PERRINS,**

No. 68, BROAD-STREET, WORCESTER;

AND

No. 6, VERE-STREET, OXFORD-STREET LONDON;

MESSRS. SUTTON & CO., BOW CHURCH-YARD;

And other Wholesale Houses, London; and Retail by the  
Chemists generally



# WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE.

---

WE think it was Xerxes who offered a premium for the invention of a new pleasure. Had the voluptuous old Persian lived in the nineteenth century, there can be little doubt that the prize would have been awarded to Messrs. Lea and Perrins of this city, for the invention of their Worcestershire Sauce—the most delicate yet piquant condiment ever yet offered to the public. We have tried it, and we strongly recommend all our readers to do the same.—*Worcester Journal*, Aug. 13, 1846.

It is universally admitted, that the WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE is the most generally useful of its kind. It has a peculiar goût of its own, full of richness and piquancy, and is unrivalled for promoting the appetite and assisting digestion.

At the breakfast table, it imparts the most exquisite relish and zest to hot or cold meat, grilled fowl, game, broiled kidney, &c., &c.; and cold fish eaten with oil, vinegar, and Worcestershire Sauce, mixed in equal proportions upon the plate, is both delicious and wholesome.

At the dinner table, every dish of roast meat should have one or more table-spoonfuls of this Sauce in the gravy; and for game, a moderate quantity should be mixed with the sauce, and the bottle placed upon the table for the use of those who require an additional quantity.

For supper, the remarks for the breakfast table will equally apply, with this addition,—that with *cheese* this Sauce affords a relish that has surprised and delighted many persons who had previously been familiar with its other estimable qualities.

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LEA & PERRINS,  
6, Vere-street, Oxford-street, London;  
AND  
68, BROAD-STREET, WORCESTER.

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(SEE WITHIN.)

The ADVANTAGES — that **LIVERPOOL** possesses for the Importing  
of **TEA**: —

- 1<sup>st</sup> It IS THE MOST CENTRAL PORT for the Three Kingdoms.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> It is surrounded by a DENSE MASS OF CONSUMERS,  
who are also the PRODUCERS of the GREAT BULK OF OUR  
EXPORTS to China.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Its superior DOCK ACCOMMODATION — which now extends  
over **200 ACRES** — with a QUAY SPACE of **15 MILES**.
  - 4<sup>th</sup> THE FACILITIES it possesses for FORWARDING Goods —  
and the MODERATE Shipping Charges.
- The above circumstances — in connection with the proverbial  
ENERGY and ENTERPRISE of its MERCHANTS — have INDUCED  
us to select **LIVERPOOL** as the place BEST QUALIFIED to  
develope FULLY and FAIRLY our system of BUSINESS.

**ROBT. ROBERTS & COMPY.,**

Tea and Coffee Salesmen,

1 & 2, ROYAL BANK BUILDINGS,

LIVERPOOL.



# 1848.

## ROBT ROBERTS & CO<sup>PS</sup> YEARLY LIST OF PRICES

### FOR FAMILIES.

This Branch of our Trade—the serving of Families—was opened September, 1840, upon a principle calculated to afford the greatest advantage in *Price*, with every possible security as to *Quality*.

ROYAL BANK BUILDINGS,  
Liverpool, 3rd March, 1848.

—There will be no alteration in the Duty on Tea this year—  
but owing to the supplies being much greater than the demand—we are enabled to  
make a considerable—reduction to Families in the Prices of Black Teas—viz:—  
FIRST CLASS CONGOU—very rich *Peloe Souclong* kind 4/- The EXTRA FINE 4 1/4—  
and *this year*, a most excellent second quality at 3/- and 3 1/3 per lb.—*which can be well*  
*recommended to the notice of all large consumers.*

Eight years have nearly elapsed since we opened this department for the supply of families,  
and each succeeding year has witnessed a considerable accession to the number of purchasers.  
The increasing amount of support with which we have been thus favoured, is a satisfactory  
testimonial to the soundness of the principles upon which the undertaking was originated. Those  
principles were—scrupulous care in the selection of our Stock—an economical system of  
management—and such moderate charges as could only be guaranteed by a rigid adherence to the  
system of prompt cash payments—a system which affords, in accordance with our original motto,

“The greatest advantage in PRICE,—and every security as to QUALITY.”

*We refer to our past policy, and its results, as the best guarantee for the security of  
our friends in the future—assuring them that the success which has attended us has  
imparted renewed energy and vigour to our efforts to maintain and deserve the public  
support.*



<b>Good Breakfast Tea—</b> —Strong Black-Leaf Congou.	<b>3/-</b> and <b>3 3</b>	Common Green . . . . .	3/-	6
<b>Fine Pekoe-Congou, Souchong kind</b>	<b>3/6</b> " <b>3 9</b>	Hyson, good . . . . .		4 0
<b>First-Class Congou, Rich Pek.-Sou. fla.,</b>	<b>4/-</b> " <b>4 4</b>	Hyson, full flavour . . . . .	4/8	to 6 0
<b>ORANGE PEKOE,—Scented.</b> 3/6 3/10		Fine Young Hyson . . . . .	4/-	and 5 0
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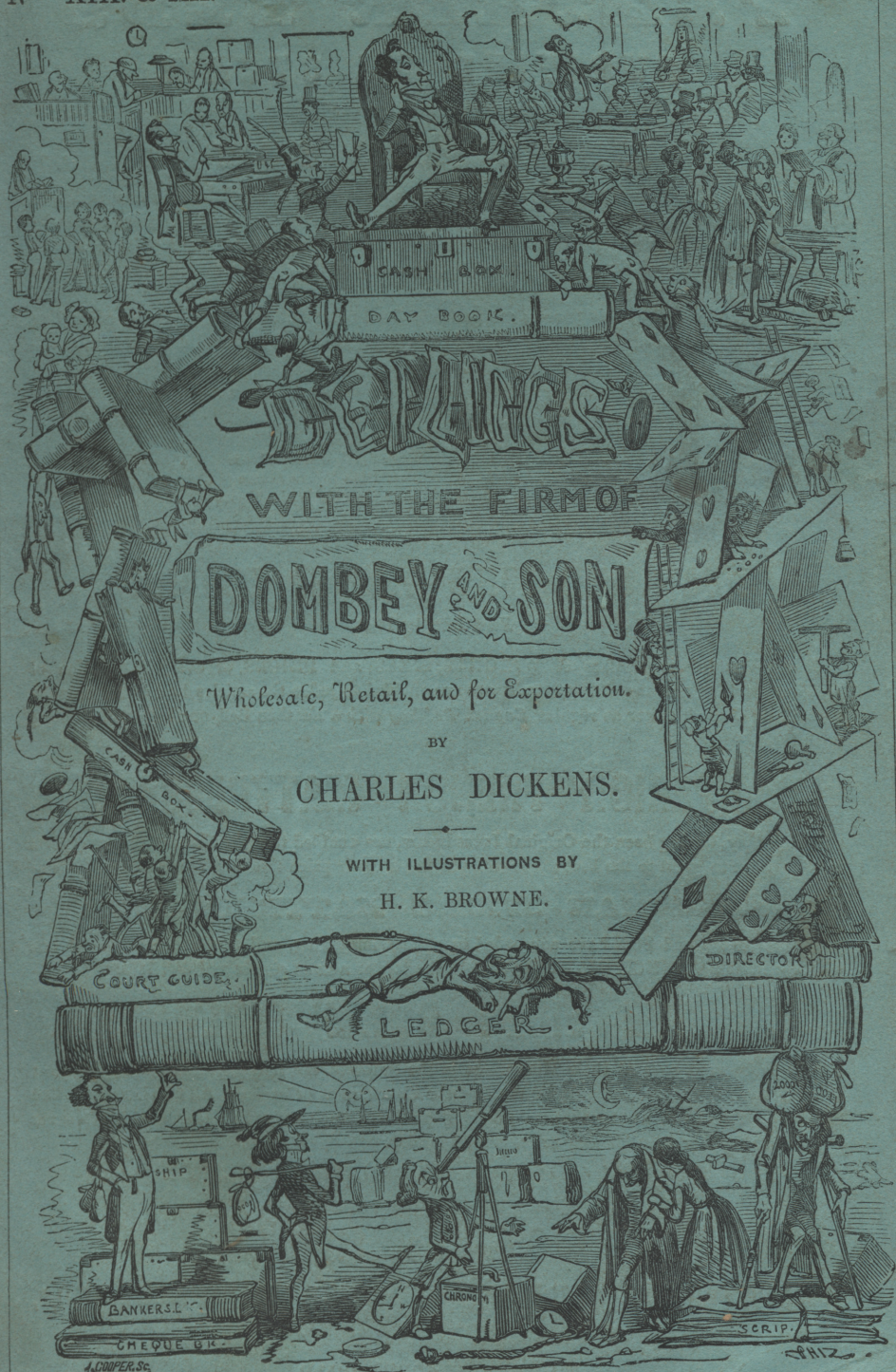
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